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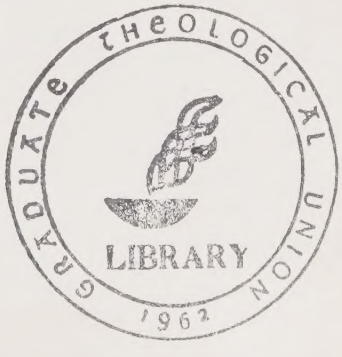

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A CONSIDERATION OF

THE DAY OF JAHWEH IN AMOS

IN THE LIGHT OF ITS POPULAR ESCHATOLOGICAL ANTECEDENTS

By

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A. B., College of the Pacific, 1936

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ABBREVIATIONS

AJSL--American Journal of Semitic Languages

AJT --American Journal of Theology

CAH --Cambridge Ancient History

HTR --Harvard Theological Review

ICC --International Critical Commentary Series

JBL --Journal of Biblical Literature

JEA --Journal of Egyptian Archaeology

Chapter I.

INTRODUCTION: A VOICE OF PROTEST

The greatness of a personality can only be evaluated from the perspective of the culture in which he stands, that is, through a proper understanding of the factors antecedent to the point of his historical appearance. Greatness never appears in vacuo, but always stands out silhouetted against the background of a certain culture and epoch. So an understanding of the philosophical antecedents of Plato enhances our estimate of his titanic genius, and we can only discover the greatness of such a man as Luther as we see him to be a luminous figure standing out against a whole cultural, economic, and political background. There is, thus, this relativity which must enter into any consideration of an historical personage.

So it is in the case of Amos of Tekoa: we do not begin to understand the man or the message until we see them in relation to a certain cultural heritage. If there is any greatness in Amos as a prophet, we may be sure that it is not the greatness of a mythological figure who dropped from the skies, but only the kind of genius which, although standing in the developmental stream of thought, was able to rise above it.

More specifically, this same consideration should be made in our study of the conception of the Day of Jahweh in Amos. Here we find the sudden appearance of a term which was to be a major concern of later prophets and was finally to emerge into the concept of the Kingdom of God. Yet is this not a defiance of any science of the genesis of ideas? Ideas do not appear as suddenly as this, as were they meteor deposits from distant skies. Every scientific attempt to trace the origins of ideas and concepts has resulted in a confirmation of the fact that ideas follow an evolutionary pattern of slow growth in which a thing once crude and naive is gradually refined by being sifted through many creative minds until it is pure.

It has long been recognized by New Testament scholars[1] that any proper understanding of the concept of the Kingdom of God must be made through a consciousness of its sequential relationship to the concept of the Day of Jahweh as it appeared in Amos and his successors. Now cannot we go a step farther in the field of the Old Testament and say that we cannot understand the Day of Jahweh in Amos until we see it in relation to its antecedents! Rather than having in Amos a concept which, Minerva-like, sprang full grown from the mind of Amos, are we not here dealing with an idea which for preceding years and centuries had been slowly evolving? Here, it seems to me, we are dealing with thought sequence--not the kind of sequence which moves in circles because of mere repetition, but the kind of sequence which like a line moves upward because of the progressive refinement of creative minds.

The purpose of this paper is two-fold. We shall attempt, first of all, to come to an understanding of the factors antecedent to Amos which contributed to the genesis of the concept of the Day of Jahweh. We shall attempt to discover the popular raw materials with which Amos started and to understand the mentality prevalent in his day. Secondly, having sketched this background, we shall then seek more specifically to understand Amos' originality and genius by tracing his points of departure from an antecedent concept and the popular mentality of his times.

We can best launch out into the whole culture of Amos' day by considering two of the oldest groups of his society: namely, priest and prophet. Because of the fact that these groups were influential in formulating Israel's ideas and ideals all through her history, and because of the fact that these groups in Amos' time were incarnations of the whole mood of the day, an understanding of Amos' relationship to them is fundamental.

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1. Cf. McCown, C. C., The Promise of His Coming.

A. Amos vs. Priest and Prophet

When Amos confronted Amaziah at Bethel, he was declaiming an institution which was of hoary venerability and which in that day was the very foundation upon which social life stood. Although in extremely remote times there was possibly a universal priesthood, i.e., when each individual could be his own priest,[1] the attitude soon arose that certain persons possessed mana or spiritual power to a greater degree than the average man and thus could effect a more intimate contact with the deity. However, since the tendency in early social organizations was to centralize authority in one man and see him possessed of the unusual mana, perhaps the priestly function was soon designated to the sheikh of the tribe or later the king of the city-state. As the state expanded the natural tendency was for the king to delegate his religious authority to priestly deputies, allowing them to take care of the sanctuary and the paraphernalia of religion. Thus the early and more important function of the priesthood--namely, mantic power or the speaking out of the will of the deity in ecstatic experience, was gradually lost in the mechanics of a hereditary profession. Rather than emphasizing experience in divination, the priestly divination soon was confined to the casting of lots, the observing of entrails, the use of the teraphim and ephod, and other things which did not depend upon the ecstatic temperament.[2]

This, to be sure, is a primitive picture of the priest, yet it is to be observed that Amaziah was essentially of such a type: professional, hereditary, and, most important, the priest of the king.[3] The issue that Amos and Hosea alike raised was not that the priesthood should possess the capacity of discovering the divine will and purpose, but that they should base their knowledge

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1. For this view and for a fuller presentation therof consult Meek, T. J., Hebrew Origins, pp. 116-175.
2. "Torah", the word for "law", comes from the root meaning "to cast (lots)".
3. Amos 7:13.

of Jahweh upon the mechanics of a profession rather than the ecstatic experience. All around him Amos saw the people flocking to the temples with enthusiastic frequency that they might, by resorting to the magic of the priestly techniques, become acquainted with Jahweh's "secrets" and "purposes". He saw clearly that the priests, desirous of personal gain,[1] were divulging Jahweh's "secrets" with a popular appeal and a superficial optimism, the focal point of pious anticipation being the inevitable coming of the glorious Day of Jahweh. Against such professionalized, popular, pleasant religion Amos protested. Jahweh had called him. He had no other credentials than his own experience. "Surely", he said, "Jahweh will do nothing except he reveal his <u>secrets</u> unto his servants the prophets".

Yet if we are to understand the spirit of Amos' message, we must see him not only in relation to the professional priests, but also to the prophets of his time, for both groups sprang originally from the same stock and were always important in Hebrew national life. Although, as we have noted, shamanism ceased among the priests due to professionalization, the "man of the spirit" did not disappear. As the priestly function became increasingly mechanical and ritualistic, a non-professional group, the prophets, laid claim to the power of divination, basing that claim not upon mechanics but upon the ecstatic experience,[2] as had been the original claim of the priesthood. The final break of the <u>nebi'im</u> or prophets with the priesthood seems to have occurred at the occasion of the Philistine oppression when all of the religious and social institutions of the entire Syro-Palestinian corridor were menaced. Up and down the country went these "flaming firebrands of war"--combinations of patriotic chauvinism[3]

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1. Amos 4:4.
2. The three words used for "prophet" are רֹאֶה, from the root ראה or "to see"; חוֹזֶה from the root חזה or "to see ecstatically"; and נָבִיא from the root נבא or "to speak". The first two are used in close association with the priesthood, while the latter represents a distinct break. Cf. I Sam. 9:9.
3. As Meek speaks of them.

and religious fanaticism--and certainly they are to be accredited with spreading the contagious vitality and enthusiasm which created among the disorganized Israelites the esprit de corps which eventually led to the establishment of the kingdom. These nebi'im were highly emotional individuals, capable of ecstatic seizures when the "hand of Jahweh" would "seize" them and "cause them to prophesy" and, because of their experiental emphasis, stood in clear contrast to the professional priest.

However, after the first fine careless rapture of prophecy had spent itself, prophecy soon began to decline, due to the same deteriorative forces which degraded the priesthood. Prophecy soon became hereditary and professional. This is evident from the fact that prophecy came to depend upon certain emotional inducements, such as music, dancing, intoxicating beveridges, rather than upon a natural and spontaneous experience in which such things were but accompaniments or forms of expression.[1] The prophets also began to use a professional "bandage" or mark.[2] They collected fees for their services, so that in Amos' time it was taken for granted that a prophet made his living from his prophetic talent.[3]

One of the organized professional prophetic groups was living together sometime at Bethel, possibly in the time of Elisha,[4] another at Gilgal,[5] and we may safely assume these schools were active in the whole of Ephraim. Amos makes known that he is not to be identified with such professionalized prophetism. He saw clearly that, as in the case of any profession, commercialized prophecy was profiting the more to the degree that it satisfied its customers. It is against the degradation of prophecy that Amos revolts. He accuses the people

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1. Cf. I Sam. 10:5; II Kings 3:15.
2. Cf. I Kings 20:38; 20:41; Zech. 13:4-6.
3. Amos 7:2. Cf. Mic. 3:11; Jer. 23:9f; 26:7; 28:1f; Ez. 13:1ff; Zech. 13:2f.
4. II Kings 2:3.
5. II Kings 4:38.

of placing social ostracism upon true prophecy,[1] forbidding the true man of God, as did Amaziah, to "drop a word against the house of Isaac".[2] According to the record of Amos, the lonely prophet who reproves in the gate and speaks bravely the truth as his experience of Jahweh compells him to utter it is loathed[3] and very unpopular. The plain implication is that the prophetic orders of Amos' day which gained their livelihood from the prophetic fee were prophesying the will of Jahweh for the future as was most pleasing to the populace. With such prophetism, characterized by optimistic nationalism, Amos refuses to be classed. To be sure we find in Amos the characteristics of a true <u>nabi'</u>,[4] but his oracles declaring the "purposes" of Jahweh for Israel's future were not based upon a desire for a popular following or professional gain, but upon the categorical imperative of his own moral consciousness.

Whether or not the doctrine of individualism was elaborated at this early date, here we have in the case of Amos a single individual breaking free from the degraded institutions of priesthood and prophecy, standing out against the popular masses and their majority dictates, claiming only the identity of a voice of protest and conscience which was raised amidst the joyful songs and noisy festivals of the day.

B. Amos and His Times

Not only must Amos be seen in relation to prophet and priest, but such a prophet must also be seen against the background of the glamour and brilliance of the age of Jeroboam II in which he lived. Although Jeroboam's reign is passed by very briefly by the prejudiced author of the Book of Kings,[5] it was the

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1. Amos 2:12.
2. Amos 7:10.
3. Amos 5:10.
4. For instance the words which he "saw" (חזה); the compulsion of the prophetic experience--Amos 3:8; 7:15; and the ecstatic visions.
5. II Kings 14:23-29.

culmination of the history of the Northern Kingdom, and in opulence and grandeur rivaled even Solomon in all his glory. Jeroboam's predecessor, Joash, won back in the sixteen years of his reign (798-783 B. C.) the cities which the Syrians had taken from his father. Shalmaneser III (783-773 B. C.) was having too much trouble with Urartu to give much attention to the movements of Israel. His successor Ashur-dan III (772-755 B. C.) was occupied with internal revolts. With a heritage of victorious spirit from Joash, and with Assyria thus occupied throughout his forty year reign (783-743 B. C.), Jeroboam II ushered in a prosperous age of contentment and peace. Paralleled by the similar triumphs of Uzziah of Judah (circa 778-740 B. C.), who had modernized his army and crushed the Philistines, Jeroboam II brought to a victorious conclusion the hundred years war against the Arameans of Damascus, by which he recovered the districts which Hazael had taken from Israel. Moab also was subdued, for the kingdom of Israel extended once more from the outskirts of the Hamath to the brook of Arabah, which according to some scholars was to the south of the Dead Sea. This means that the constant military raids ceased, and there soon grew up in Israel a generation who had never known the experience of defeat.

With the international tension temporarily relieved, Israel delighted to bask in the sun of this new peace and prosperity. With rejoicing and anticipation of greater future conquests, they boasted of the retaking of Lodebar and Karnaim in the Transjordan;[1] with peace at home, Israel and Judah also revived trade and commerce, so that Hosea calls the northern kingdom a veritable "Canaan",[2] which in that day was the Hebrew way of saying "a trader"; and Amos gives us a vivid picture of a land suddenly intoxicated with the new commerce making haste to get rich. The building of magnificent castles and summer

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1. Amos 6:13.
2. Hosea 12:7.

houses was carried on by those who extorted money from the poor, and princes furnished their luxurious homes with costly ivory. The entire period was one of great building and expanding.[1] Such material prosperity and political security was the basis for an ambitious nationalism and a confident optimism so characteristic of the time.

The important thing to observe about the age of Jeroboam II, however, is that it was an age of great economic change filled with all of the evils and excesses which characterize any period of transition which breaks away from the old foundations. Until the eighth century, Israel had been but a small group of people, fighting to maintain their identity. They had once been wandering nomads, and had made the great transition to an agricultural economy. Now in the age of Jeroboam II, with international tension relieved, Israel began to make the great step forward from an agricultural to a commercial economy. In such a period of transition, Israel came upon temptations which none of her laws had anticipated. There was closer contact with other cultures; rapid accumulation of wealth; cruelty and oppression by those in power; exuberant patriotism eclipsing vital religion. Such a period, when evil, rather than being camouflaged, was boldly and glaringly committed in the very name of religion, was a most appropriate time, in the plan of God, for an awakening of prophetic conscience.

As we have noted, up until the time of Amos, prophecy identified itself with the nationalistic movement. To be religious and patriotic were one and the same thing, and prophecy was an indistinguishable blend between the two. Elijah and Elisha, who began to break away from the professional nebi'im, were constrained, because of national exigency, to center their efforts in stimulating national zeal for Jahweh and Israel. Indeed, so active was Elisha in the

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1. Hosea 8:14; Micah 3:12; Isaiah 9:10; Amos, passim.

sphere of politics that when he died he was called "Israel's chariot and the horseman thereof".[1] Now, however, since the immediate national danger is removed, prophecy in Amos moves from defense of the nation to become criticism of that very nation. Encouragement becomes protest. Nationalism becomes supernationalism. Superficial hopes and ambitions become realistic judgement and doom.

C. Amos--A Protestant Par Excellence

To say that Amos was a "protestant" is not to modernize him so completely that a denominational label is placed upon him, but merely to describe him in the literal sense of that word. However else one attempts to analyze the prophetic message of Amos--whether political prediction or eschatological doom,--certainly all scholars would be unanimous in affirming that the dominant theme of Amos' message, as indeed in all true prophecy, was protest. This is the upshot of all that has been said above. Coming up from the quiet Tekoan hillsides of Judah, he had flaming in his being the nomadic spirit of protest against all of the Babel-like characteristics of the civilization of his day--its haughtiness,[2] its spiritual complacency,[3] its religious abuses,[4] its superficial brilliance,[5] its social stratification,[6] its self-confidence,[7] its exploitation of the under-privileged.[8] Indeed, how important is this nomadic ideal in all of the major prophets, and how their minds linger on the desert days of Israel's infancy when the glaring evils of civilization were not yet known and, under tribal organization, all shared mutually in the simplicity of life![9] Likewise, Amos comes up from the Tekoan country-land, where the moral air was purer and where his conscience was sharpened by the rigors of the desert, to hurl fierce condemnation upon all of the ivory palaces and summer houses of so-called civilization where men gloss their consciences by false religion. He

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1. II Kings 13:14.
2. Amos 6:8c.
3. Amos 6:1-8
4. Amos 2:8f.
5. Amos 3:15.
6. Amos 4:1.
7. Amos 6:13.
8. Amos 2:6; 5:12.
9. Cf. Amos 5:25; Hos. 9:10; 10:1; 11:1; Jer. 2:1-3; 6:16; etc.

protested against the contamination of the nomadic Nazirites by such civiliza-
tion.[1] His conscience was outraged at the fact that the religion of the desert days had become the ritualistic, magical religion of an agricultural environ-
ment.[2] He protested against their sacrilegious worship of voluptuous gods, rather than worshipping the God who had given birth to their nation, calling them from Egypt, destroying veritable giants who opposed them, and setting be-
fore them the opportunity of a great future.[3] He protested against their silenc-
ing the tongues of true prophets.[4] He protested against the lavish system of sacrifice and the ritualizing of their relationship to Jahweh, rather than establishing it upon a moral basis as it was in days of their spiritual infancy.[5] Here was protest so thorough-going and unsparing, that Amos, as in the case of every great prophet, joined the ranks of the unpopular and the persecuted.

D. The Focus of Protest: The Popular Doctrine of the Future

Some of the specific objects of Amos' protest we have noted above, but we find protest reaching its climax of vehemence as it focuses itself more generally upon "those who desire the Day of Jahweh". It is with this focus of protest that this paper is concerned.

Manifestly there was some popular notion about the Day of Jahweh as implied by the fact that Amos rails so furiously against its perverted interpre-
tation,[6] and the fact that "Day" is so used elsewhere as something which was an anticipation of the times.[7] To a more complete discussion of the character of the popular doctrine of the Day of Jahweh we shall turn in succeeding pages. But whatever its character, Amos came to protest against it with all of the fervor and zeal of a true Nabi. Blinded by the political and economic bril-

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1. Amos 2:11. 2. Amos 5:25. 3. Amos 2:8f.
4. Amos 2:11; 5:10. 5. Amos 5:25. 6. Amos 5:18f.
7. "That Day"--Is. 17:7; 30:23; 28:5; 29:18; Hos. 2:18; Mic. 2:4; 4:6; 5:10; Zech. 9:16; 14:4,6,9.
"That Time"--Jer. 31:1; 33:15; 50:4; Zeph. 3:19; Joel 3:(4)1; Ez. 7:12.
"The Day"---Ez. 7:10; Mic. 3:6; Is. 39:6; Jer. 7:32 (and 14 other times in Jer.) cf. I Sam. 2:31; also II Kings 20:17 (late); Amos 5:18f; 8:9; 8:13.

liance of Jeroboam's age, Amos insisted that men had not seen the real "Day" which was falling upon them. Material prosperity and military success had prompted them to make as their central affirmation of faith: Jahweh is with us![1] The covenant relation, which although not specifically mentioned in the whole of Amos' message is clearly the background of his thinking,[2] was to them the basis for future certainty, for the people reasoned: how could Jahweh, bound indissoluably to Israel in covenant, abandon them and maintain His own existence?[3] It was this same laissez-faire doctrine against which we find Micah later protesting:[4]

"Is not Jahweh in the midst of us?
No misfortune can befall us!"

There seems to have been current in the eighth century B.C. a kind of popular nationalistic millenarianism, sponsored by the priests and false pro hets, which was based upon a misconstrued understanding of the relation of Israel with Jahweh and upon the seemingly many omens of Jahweh's favor which were so easy to find in a time of opulence and peace. The history of eighth century prophecy, to a great degree, is the history of protest against such a popular doctrine.

It was against the false sense of safety which religion provided and its consequent easy-going doctrine of the future for Israel that Amos spent the full force of his protest. A time will come, warns Amos, when such satisfying religion will vanish and men will thirst for the very words of Jahweh which they rejected from Jahweh's prophets.[5] The horns of the altar, the safest place in the temple, will be cast to the ground.[6] All of the certainties which the magic of ritual and ceremony assure for the future are mere delusions, and witness of that fact is to be Jahweh's destruction of the altar

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1. Amos 5:14; cf. Num. 23:21b
2. יָדַע in 3:2 means "to distinguish from, to choose", not merely "to acknowledge or take notice of".
3. This belief that Jahweh must save his people if He is to preserve Himself survived, despite the prophets, until the fall of Jerusalem, 586 B.C.
4. Micah 3:11b 5. Amos 8:12 6. Amos 3:14b

of Bethel itself, objective of men's pilgrimages and scene of their lavish sacrifices.[1] Thus Amos protested against the laissez-faire longing--to use Wellhausen's apt words--for "the great crisis which would bring in with one blow the new glorious era without their requiring to move a finger". Overturning the many popular beliefs which clustered around the concept of the Day of Jahweh, Amos interrupts the noise of their revelries and the nonchalance of those who lolled in ease upon their cushioned divans with such flaming words of indignation as these:[2]

> "Woe unto you who desire the Day of Jahweh!
> What, then, does the Day of Jahweh mean to you?
> . . . . . .
> Is not the Day of Jahweh darkness and not light,
> And blackness, with no brightness in it?"

Thus in Amos we find prophecy divorcing itself from narrow nationalism and spending its full nabi' zeal upon criticizing the nation and protesting against a false Jahwism. To Amos, anything that failed to see the approaching calamity in which an unjust civilization must meet its judgment and its dissolution was patriotism that was no more than chauvinism and religion that was no more than a narcotic to deaden men's awareness to the stern realities of life. As Amos speaks about the Day of Jahweh, he effects a complete reversal of popular belief. The people, prompted by professional priests, false prophets, and the prosperous signs of the times, had substituted for realistic pessimism a superficial optimism; for deserving woe, undeserving weal; for darkness, light. Such people, characterized by pious complacency, moral recklessness, and proud self-satisfaction, Amos scourged with an unconsenting conscience. Once again the Voice of Conscience and Justice thundered terribly, this time from the Sinai

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1. Amos 9:1f. The tradition preserved in I Kings 13 of a "man of God" from Judah who went to Bethel in the reign of Jeroboam II and threatened the altar with destruction by earthquake, although late and evidencing legendary embellishment, seems to be a later reminiscence that the nerve of the prophetic ministry of Amos was directed against the Temple religion of his day. Cf. Amos 3:14; 7:9; 9:1.
2. Amos 5:18f.

of one individual's heart, so that, although the superscription to the book of Amos is unquestionably late,[1] the general character of Amos' prophecy is there clearly stated. Some time ago, W. R. Smith recorded the spirit of Amos' protest in a concise, but expressive sentence:[2]

> "Here the idea (of the Day of Jahweh) appears as peculiar to the prophet, but as a current popular notion, which Amos criticizes and, so to speak, turns upside down."

With such an introduction, the general conclusion of this paper may be stated very briefly: In Amos we have a voice of protest crying out against a facile doctrine of the future, and, although Amos thinks in terms of his eschatological heritage he stands apart from priest, false prophet, and populace to place that eschatology in an entirely different context--the context of doom demanded by his own experience, rather than the context of optimism demanded by the prevalent mentality. Yet this thesis is by no means accepted by all scholars, and our immediate task will be to turn to the field of scholarship in an attempt to find our way through an imposing mass of theories. Although in the following chapters much of our discussion will seem to go far afield from the actual discussion of Amos, it seems to me that a cultural approach to his prophecy is imperative if we are to understand the prevalent mentality and Amos' relation thereto. The more I have read the book of Amos itself, the more I have become convinced that we do not begin to understand Amos himself until we understand the popular scheme of thought against which he was protesting. Stimulated by our increasing knowledge of the life of the Near East from extra-Biblical sources, such an approach makes the prophet stand forth in the clearer light of greater understanding and appreciation.

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1. See Harper, W. R., ICC, Amos and Hosea, pp. 9f.
2. Smith, W. R., Prophets of Israel, p. 396.

Chapter II

THE DAY OF JAHWEH AND ESCHATOLOGY

A. Resumé of the Scholastic Controversy

Just as scholars are divided over the nature of the ministry of Jesus, one school maintaining that the prime concern of Jesus was practical and ethical, the other insisting that the main interest of Jesus was eschatological and apocalyptical--so, in a similar fashion, Old Testament scholars are divided in the criticism of the prophetical books. One school, in the scholastic succession of Wellhausen, maintains that prophecy began with ethics--eschatology and apocalyptic being a later artificial creation of periods of greater national stress; while the other school, breaking away from the Wellhausen tradition, although accepting many of its critical achievements, insists that eschatology was the cultural heritage of the prophets and that what moralizing they did was done in an eschatological framework of thought. Thus, the issue is clear-cut. According to one school, the controlling concern of such a prophet as Amos is practical, political, ethical; according to the other, the dominant spirit of his prophecy is supernatural and beyond the practical. According to the Wellhausen tradition, eschatology is the goal of prophecy and therefore alien to Amos; according to the opposing school, eschatology is the starting point, and therefore Amos' heritage.[1]

This scholastic controversy seems to open up three possibilities in regard to the protest of Amos against the popular doctrine of the Day of Jahweh: in

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1. The word "eschatology", "the doctrine or theory of the last things", has been used to cover a wide field of meaning--man's condition after death, the destiny of nations, the end of an era, the end of the world. The usage of the word in this paper will not refer to the destiny of the individual--death or resurrection--but in Micklem's definition, to "any outlook upon the future which expects the coming of a catastrophe that in some degree marks the end of an epoch if not the end of the world". See Micklem, N., Prophecy and Eschatology, p. 105.

the first place, there is the possibility that neither people nor prophet may have held an eschatological conception of the future, in which case Amos would have sought merely to moralize a pattern of political expectations; in the second place, the people may have held to a doctrine of a miraculous intervention in the world order to bring about the glorious "Day", but Amos, revolting against the falseness of such magic, sought to purge the popular doctrine of all miraculous emphasis and lay stress upon moral forces; in the third place, there is the possibility that both people and prophet may have held in common an eschatological doctrine of the future which was the cultural heritage of the times--in which case Amos sought not to reduce the eschatological to the political, but merely to make it more ethical and realistic. Since the proper choice from these positions is essential to the understanding of Amos' message, we may well devote a brief space to a consideration of the critical results of scholarship in regard to prophecy in general and Amos in particular.

1. The Neo-critical School

Turning to what may be called the "neo-critical" school,[1] we find it to be championed originally by Wellhausen and his two students, Robertson Smith and Smend. Rather than finding any supernaturalistic colorings in eighth century prophecy, these men lay emphasis upon the historical and ethical elements of the prophetic message. Wherever there is any intimation of the supernatural, as in Amos 7:4, the passage is reduced to mere poetry or the fantastic imagery of prophetic ecstasy. Eighth century prophets, because of the demand of circumstance, laid supreme emphasis upon doom at the hand of surrounding nations. The Day of Jahweh was but a political catastrophe, although the important thing is that the prophets moralized it because of a

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1. This term is employed by Kemper Fullerton to describe this school. For a fuller consideration of this scholastic controversy see JBL, 42 (1922), 1-101.

conception of the moral majesty of Jahweh and contrasting national sin. According to this position, a strict continuity between the present and future is demanded with no eschatological break in the political chain of events, and the psychological rise of eschatology is explained as an exilic phenomon, when, the national continuity being broken, it was most natural for the Hebrews to detach their thinking from history and to contemplate the miraculous and the eschatological.

Stade is another important supporter of the neo-critical view, but is more daring in his reconstruction of "genuine" prophecy due to rigorous criticism.[1] His general method is "the criterion of ideas". Emphasizing the note of ethical doom in a political convulsion of events, Stade relegates all eschatology to the exile.[2] He says:

> "Earlier (i.e. in the pre-exilic period) it was always an enemy already threatening in the background, a danger actually approaching; after the exile...prophecy lost its connection with history and its foundations in history."

So, in the spirit of Stade, many scholars today see no eschatological implications in the conception of the Day of Jahweh. Hölscher, emphasizing literary form, believes that the literary scheme with makes eschatological promises of light and hope appear in a context of doom does not belong to the eighth century prophets, but is a much later effort to neutralize a curse by a counteracting blessing.[3] He continues to state the position that the phrase, "The Day of Jahweh" was merely a popular phrase which Amos borrowed from the devotional language of the cult, in which the anticipated "Day" was but a periodical festival day looked forward to with anticipation and desire by every pious Hebrew. Substantiation for this is found in the

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1. According to this governing principle, if an idea appears in one particular passage in harmonious agreement with its context and in another passage in an unorganized and unintelligible way, the priority must be given to the former.
2. Prolegomona, p. 433
3. Die Propheten, p. 457f.

fact that the "Days of the Baalim"[1] were not periods in which the Baalim would eventually triumph and hold sway, but merely festival days. Also, it is insisted that in this particular passage in which the "Day of Jahweh" is mentioned, Amos is protesting against the meaningless ritual and voluptuous festivity which were connected with feast days, each of which was Jahweh's "Day".[2] Thus Amos came to Ephraim, according to this hypothesis, to proclaim the prophetic message that Jahweh wanted none of these periodical festal days after the manner of their popular celebration. What He desired was worship that centered about letting "justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a perennial stream".[3] In this position, Hölscher[4] is followed also by Heidel.[5]

An interpretation of the Day of Jahweh championed by J. M. P. Smith, but later revised in the spirit of Gressmann,[6] is that it is merely a coming day of battle which Amos had the political foresight to envision, and, since all wars in antiquity were religious wars, the Day of Jahweh was to be the day of Jahweh's battle. Thus "Day" was used in the same militaristic sense in the "Day of Midian" and in its usage in the Assyrian prayer to the god of fire: "May thy dreadful day overtake thy enemies". Such a view has historical validation. During the course of the development of primitive religion, tribal gods or city-gods became more and more powerful politically until they assumed the proportions of national gods.[8] These national gods, personifications of national desire

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1. Hos. 2:13; cf. Hos. 2:11.
2. Amos 5:21f.
3. Amos 5:24.
4. This position, although having the virtue of originality, has not the virtue of adherence to the facts as they are presented to us in the book of Amos itself. To be sure, Amos had much to say about cultic practices, but in the light of his total message the conclusion seems to be that rather than criticizing the cult as such, he was protesting against its excesses and the pleasant doctrine of the future which it elaborated.
5. Cf. Heidel, W. F., The Day of Jahweh.
6. See article, "The Day of Jahweh", AJT,V (1901)pp.505f; cf. AJT XI, pp.320f.
7. Is. 9:4.
8. A good example is Marduk of the city of Babylon, who, under the aggressive unification policy of Hamurrabi, became a national god.

and ambition, naturally sought to extend influence over all gods and all peoples. All wars were thus religious wars, and the political dominion of a nation was synonomous with the religious dominion of a god. As with all deities of Semitic antiquity, Jahweh too was a war-god[1] and his conquests were recorded in a document known as "The Book of the Wars of Jahweh".[2] From the time of Deborah down through the entire sweep of Israel's national history wars were summoned and fought in the name of Jahweh, often with some visible manifestation of his presence in the battle. Hence, to be religious and patriotic was one and the same thing. According to this very plausible view, then, the "Day" that was so zealously anticipated by the pious Hebrew of Amos' time was a great day of battle in which Jahweh would assert his militaristic superiority.

Cripps, sensing the difficulty of the presence of supernaturalistic imagery in Amos, seems to indicate that there was in the popular mind an eschatology of the future, but that Amos did not mean to speak eschatologically. He merely used popular eschatological language to paint the terrible truth of the coming, immediate calamity of captivity, thus reducing the content of the Day of Jahweh for Amos to a political prediction with a theological justification.[3] Likewise Micklem sees no eschatological colorings whatsoever in prophecy.[4]

Although Duhm stands in the Wellhausen tradition, he seems to be a bridge from the neo-critical school to the second main school of thought. Using the drastic literary criticism of the Wellhausen school, he at the same time criticizes the Wellhausen interpretation of prophecy as an attempt to modernize it in the practical and ethical interests of the present. While Wellhausen lays all the stress upon the historical and polit-

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1. Cf. Dt. 33:27; Ex. 15:16; I Sam. 18:17; 25:28; Jud. 5:23; 5:31
2. Num. 21:14
3. Cripps, R.S. The Book of Amos, p. 31
4. Op. cit.

ical, Duhm emphasizes the supernatural and catastrophic. He admits the ethical concern of eighth century prophecy which Stade and others point out, but he sees that ethical concern given in an eschatological context. Rather than the future being a mere "idealization of the present", there is a discontinuity between the two. Duhm carefully steers clear of the word "mythological" in his interpretation, but he does lay great emphasis upon the miraculous and the super-historical. However, Duhm, with searching critical analysis, will not grant that all eschatology of hope and promise is native to the eschatological thought of the eighth century prophecy. Rather, he sees evidences that prophecy, as it has been handed down to us, is an anthology, much of it incorporating the Jewish eschatology of the late post-exilic period.

2. The Archaeological School

The failure of Duhm to distinguish clearly between eighth century prophetic eschatology and subsequent apocalyptic thought, calls our attention to the second major school, the "archaeological" school,[1] which believes that it has found a criterion of determination in the realm of mythology and comparative religion. The founder of this school was Hermann Gunkel. Showing that certain Biblical phrases and ideas are utterly unintelligible in their present context, he pointed out[2] that they acquire meaning and intelligibility only as in them are seen mythological reminiscences which must be traced back to early Semitic antiquity. Especially did he point out the influence of Babylonian cosmogonic mythology upon many Biblical passages, particularly in the first chapters of Genesis. Gunkel suggested that the same method might well be employed in an understanding of the Day of Jahweh, and he himself sketched out a proposed history of the concept on the basis of

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1. This name was chosen by Gressmann to distinguish his method of investigation from that of the neo-critical school.
2. In Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit, 1895

his new method.[1]

Revolting from the Wellhausen tradition, Gressmann took up the subject of Eschatology where Gunkel left off,[2] and subjected it to the penetrating insight of his scholarly genius. In order to validate the genuineness of the "hope" passages which the neo-critical school unanimously attributes to a late date, Gressmann points out that their criteria which they use to determine lateness are utterly invalid. The criterion of language is invalid, and scholars have of late viewed this test with increasing suspicion. Because of the hopeless state of the text due to accidental and deliberate change, the criterion of style is also ineffective. Finally, the criterion of ideas and context is unconvincing because of the essentially unconnected relationship between the literary fragments which constitute the written prophecy, and because of the fact that the prophets employed an eschatological scheme of Unheil-Heil which they inherited from their cultural past. Thus the argument from lack of connection does not hold. One would not expect connection to exist between an anthology of literary fragments any more than the abrupt Doom-Hope scheme which was characteristic of eschatology in the period of Amos and much earlier. Gressmann traces this Unheil-Heil eschatological scheme back to primitive antiquity, noting the presence in Babylonia of an eschatological myth, but more influentially so in Egypt. In the development of this popular eschatology, he noted three general periods:

1. Universal mythology
2. National or Israelitic mythology
3. Prophetic or refined eschatology

Thus there had been a process of cultural adaptation at work, in which the Israelites, inheriting this mythological framework of thought, adapted it to Jahweh and their own future. With the prophets, says Gressmann, this scheme

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1. In Bousset und Gunkel, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Heft I (1903) (sic !) Cf. Fullerton, JBL 40:p. [illegible]
2. In Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie, 1906

remains, although its popular and traditional elements were refined by their high ethical ideas.

Independently Eduard Meyer, the great Egyptologist, arrived at similar conclusions, finding in Egyptian prophecy a type of Messianism and apocalyptic which held very close affinities to Hebrew prophecy and apocalyptic. So he says:

> "Upon these traditional stories of the future did the great Hebrew prophets lay hold and they made them the basis of their preaching and thereby filled them with a wholly different spiritual content." (1)

The Scotch scholar, Adam Welch, likewise, in a refreshingly independent way arrived at the conclusion that although in earlier prophecy we do not find the rigid Doom-Hope eschatological scheme of which Gressmann speaks, we do find clear evidences, especially in Amos, of a coming world-catastrophe which cannot be pictured in political categories, but which he sees depicted by Amos in the inherited mythological imagery of the day.[2] Even Wardle, so cautious about seeing influence of Egypt and Babylonia, recognizes the possibility that the smug eschatological optimism of Egypt and Babylonia may have formed part of the popular religion which Amos confronted.[3]

Sellin is also an important champion of the archeological school of thought, but he seems to feel the difficulty of Gressmann's mythological argument for the pre-prophetic origin of eschatology. For him, the more the mythological character of eschatology is emphasized, the more likely it is that the protesting prophets of Israel would have nothing to do with it. He does not deny the pre-prophetic existence of eschatology, but he does divorce it absolutely from Gressmann's primeval eschatological myth. Rather than seeking for a mythological origin of prophetic eschatology, he seeks a moral

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1. Meyer, E., Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme
2. Welch, Adam, The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom, Amos in loc. Also see The Expositor, 18 (1919), pp. 81f.
3. Wardle, W. L., Israel and Babylon, p. 104.

source, finding that source to be in the moral revelation of Jahweh and his moral covenant relationship at Sinai. All mythological traces to which Gunkel and Gressmann refer in the Old Testament, he says, had by the time they came into use in Israel become mere empty metaphors and dead pictures which were used to express the eschatology native to the Hebrew religion. Israel's eschatology, according to Sellin, takes its eschatology not from primeval myths, but from the historical experiences of Sinai and the conquest of Palestine.[1]

Fullerton's brief summary of the character of these two schools of thought might well come to our attention at this point:

> "Thus over against the neo-critical insistence (a) upon the criterion of ideas, (b) upon their documentation within the Old Testament canon, and (c) upon psychological considerations in the endeavor to relate them to each other, the archaeologists lay the emphasis (a) upon the great body of undocumented tradition of which there are many hints in the documents themselves, (b) upon the larger background of ancient oriental thought outside the canonical scriptures, and (c) upon the mythological character of much of this tradition and thought. In a word, where the neo-critic insists upon psychology, the archaeological critic is apt to insist upon mythology." (2)

Even the neo-critics, although objecting vigorously to Gunkel's and Gressmann's defense of the genuineness of those prophecies which they have rejected, admit that to a certain degree the archaeologists have made three great contributions: first, they have established beyond any shadow of doubt the fact that the doctrine of "The Day of Jahweh" existed in popular form long before the time of Amos, and that the eighth century prophets moralized the concept; secondly, they have made highly probable the currency of the pre-prophetic doctrine of the Remnant, which in popular form was to be Israel;[3] thirdly, they

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1. Der alt-testamentliche Prophetismus, 147ff.
2. Fullerton, Op cit, p. 76f.
3. Amos 5:15, which seems to contain an implication of a pre-prophetic doctrine of the Remnant, is accepted as genuine by even so radical a critic as Marti.

have maintained the pre-prophetic character of the Messiah, who, although originally a mythological character, was later attached to the Davidic dynasty and made historical.

Such a brief resume seems to give the impression that scholarship has come to absolutely no conclusions and that therefore the whole field of prophecy is a very confused one. One school insists that although there was a popular eschatology, Amos would have nothing to do with it; the other insists that Amos adopted popular eschatology so completely that in him is unmistakable evidence of the eschatological scheme of darkness and light, doom and hope, woe and weal. So cogent are the arguments adduced by each side to support its contentions and so brilliant is the scholarship on both sides of the issue that one at first is baffled as to which interpretation is to be accepted in the approach of Amos.

But there are a few conclusions that these opposing schools do hold in common. The most important one for our concern is that both schools agree with a fair degree of unanimity that there was a popular doctrine of the future existing before the time of Amos. Due to the labors of scholars such as Gunkel, Gressmann, E. Meyer, Bousset, Jeremias, and Bertholet the neo-critics will go at least this far with their opponents. Here, then, is common ground. Whether Amos' message was eschatological or non-eschatological we shall seek to conclude later. If not a prophetic eschatology, there was at least a popular eschatology, as Amos 5:18f. seems to make evident. Therefore, in line with our proposed purpose, our approach will be to study the nature and development of such a popular doctrine and then later to relate Amos to that heritage.

The difficulty of determining the popular idea of the Day of Jahweh is readily apparent. There are no historical records earlier than the eighth century itself, and to venture out into the field of comparative religion,

archaeology, and anthropology is to engage in speculation which in too many instances is not based upon documentation. Furthermore, even when we confine ourselves to the prophetical documents which are handed to us and seek to trace in them reminiscences of earlier popular beliefs, we must remember that the whole Old Testament has been subjected to a series of editorial processes which in many cases have manifestly added to, mitigated, and destroyed earlier beliefs. Gressmann has reminded us of the uncertain character of the text and accidental and deliberate changes and additions which have been made in it, and yet it is to be asked seriously if Gressmann's eschatological "style" which he sees as an element of popular religion is not the result of the very same compilatory process. Furthermore, we are not sure how much of the literature is to be taken literally--or symbolically, for the prophets used the medium of poetry to express themselves, and poetry always employs the language of symbolism and figure. It is to be seriously questioned, too, in the spirit of Sellin, as to how much of the mythology which comes to us in the Old Testament had passed into language long after the Hebrews knew their cultural or religious origins.[1] Finally, we must ever be on guard against setting up our own theory of what popular eschatology or religion was likely to have been, thus in our approach working at the unconscious dictation of a presupposition, the accumulated results of which we afterward employ to prove that very presupposition with which we began. The circular character of such a method is obvious.

B. Conditions Favorable to Popular Eschatology

On the other hand, we must note that there are certain conditions in Israel's history and religion which by their very nature are favorable to the development of eschatology, which can constitute a priori grounds for escha-

1. This may certainly be asked of "Tehom" in Gen. 1:2. At the late date in which this passage was written, one can rightly ask if the Priestly writer was at all conscious of even employing a mythological allusion.

tology and sufficient basis for our cultural approach.

In the first place, the geographical position of Palestine was one which placed upon men the compulsion of thinking in terms of history.[1] Even a glance at the position of Palestine upon the map will indicate the position of strategic importance which it occupied in that day, and for that matter, yet today. Called by Breasted "the fertile crescent", the entire land was coveted by every major power of the history of the Near East. It provided a trade route between the river valley of Mesopotamia and the river valleys of Egypt. It possessed raw materials of lumber, oil and minerals which were needed in the upbuilding of the great civilizations and the waging of wars. It was the most necessary strategical position for any power to occupy if it were to seek to expand its dominion. Indeed over the whole of the Old Testament hangs the shadow of the threat of Israel's national extinction, and it is not by chance that every prophet appeared at the moment of some historical crisis.[2] Situated in such a precarious fertile oasis, where the tides of great cultures flowed and where every moment of their national existence was overshadowed by the peril of defeat and destruction at the hands of some of her covetous neighbors, Israel's thinkers and religious leaders were compelled to find some divine Purpose supporting them in their insignificance and providing meaning for the historical struggle. They were almost predetermined to think eschatologically.

Another condition, closely allied with the foregoing, in which one can discover the atmosphere that favors eschatological thinking is in the close

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1. This position has been elaborated by Dr. James Muilenburg.
2. So at the Philistine crisis arose the Nebi'im; the Syrian crisis, which lasted from the time of Solomon until about 800 B. C., brought Elijah and Elisha; the Assyrian crisis which superseded the Syrian crisis brought Amos and Hosea in the north, Micah and Isaiah in Judah; the Babylonian crisis which eclipsed the Assyrian menace and endured until 538 B. C. brought Jeremiah, the Persian Crisis, 538-333, brought Second Isaiah.

alliance of religion with patriotism which was certainly a trait of the common mind, as it is too often even in this remote day. Although perhaps we cannot go with Sellin in all of his conclusions, certainly we must go with him as far as to say that the covenant-relation of Sinai had in it the seeds of a national eschatology. The thing which made the religion of the Israelites different from the similar worship of other tribal gods was the fact that the people had accepted Jahweh as a matter of voluntary choice, not through the meaningless channels of tradition or inheritance. Although it seemed that the covenant was always broken, the genius of the Hebrew prophets sought to bring the people once again into the real meaning of that close and intimate relation.[1] It was thus because Israel's religion was based on a voluntary choice and forced constantly to deal with the crucial factors of history that Hebraism is characterized by such vitality and endurance. All of the historical traditions were based on the fundamental assumption of Jahweh's power and love for his chosen people. Deborah sings her song of battle in such a spirit and calls the scattered tribes to arms in Jahweh's name. We have noted how the nebi'im, under the power of an immediate ecstatic relationship with Jahweh, went up and down the land stirring up nationalistic spirit. Gad and Nathan were in league with David. Ahijah the prophet was a counsellor of Jeroboam. Joash's visit to Elisha's deathbed shows the prophet deeply concerned for the victory of his country's armies.[2] All through the history of the Hebrews there was this close affiliation of patriotism and religion, indicative of the conviction that Jahweh was concerned about Israel's political life--even through all its vicissitudes. Prior to David's time, contests were waged with Moabites, Ammonites, Amalekites and Philistines,

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1. E.g. Amos 3:2.
2. II Kings 13:14-19.

deliverance being wrought under Ehud, Shamgar, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, and Saul. David's reign was likewise a period of perilous warfare and conquest, and territory gained by David began to slip away under Solomon. The long struggle with Syria began with the reign of Baasha of Israel, continuing down with bitter hostility through Jehoahaz and Jehoash. There were skirmishes with the Philistines in the days of Nadab of Israel; war with Mesha, king of Moab, in the time of Jehoram; Assyria had collected tribute from Jehu. As the Israelite looked back over that long history of persistent warfare and struggle, how could he do other than lift up an anxious prayer of desire for the coming of a time when Jahweh should bring to an end all of the menacing vicissitudes of history and completely subjugate his political enemies. The fact that Jahweh had made a covenant and promised an insignificant band of nomads the land[1] must have been re-interpreted in popular religion to assure them of a time when once again Jahweh would triumph over his enemies and allow Israel to possess her land in peace and prosperity.[2] In fact, Israel's unique position among the nations mentioned by the J and E traditions and belonging to Israel's early history[3] is probably a reflection of the popular idea of the favor of Jahweh for Israel. To be sure, throughout the perpetual hostilities other nations and strange gods were often victorious and seemed stronger than Jahweh. But this would not always be so. Jahweh would have his "Day"--he must, for if Israel were destroyed who would worship Him? Eschatology would thrive in such a religio-political atmosphere as was that.

A third factor which would be favorable to the rise of eschatology in

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1. Cf. Exodus 5:27f; 24:1-8.
2. Amos' seeming protest aginst the popular notion of the close relation of Israel with Jahweh carries with it the implication that such was one of the fundamental basis of popular eschatology itself. Amos 3:2.
3. Cf. Gen. 12:2ff; 18:18ff; 27:29; 28:14; Exodus 19:5f; 34:10; Numbers 23:9; 24:9,17.

Israel, as McCown has suggested,[1] is the cultural inferiority of the Hebrews. Archaeological investigation is leading scholars to the conclusion that Israel was but a small band of people inhabiting the mountains of Palestine, culturally insignificant in the eyes of the great civilizations of Babylonia and Egypt. In Egyptian Hieroglyphic, Israel is mentioned only once--on the stele of Mernephtah of about 1250 B.C. Babylonia not once mentions this small group of people. Assyrian inscriptions make only incidental reference to Ahab and Jehu, Pekah and Pekahiah, Ahaz and Manassah, while the land of Israel is referred to as "Bit Omri". Jehu is represented as doing homage to the Assyrian king on the black obelisk of Shalmaneser III. Outside of a few incidental references such as these, Israel was looked upon as an inferior group culturally and politically, which we would never have come to know but through the Providential safe-keeping of their historical narratives and literature. Recent Palestinian excavations are confirming the fact that the Hellenistic strata above and the Canaanitic strata below are much greater than the inferior culture of the Hebrews. If, then, we can prove that there was an "eschatological myth" or apocalpytic thought in the culture of Egypt and Babylonia, both of which were great, mature civilizations thousands of years before Israel came upon the historical stage, is there not sufficient justification to suppose that Israel would have appropriated such thought from her cultural superiors?

The progress of our thinking to this point may now be reviewed. The neo-critical school, which has insisted so strongly upon the non-eschatological nature of prophecy, has, like Achilles, one point of vulnerability: namely, a majority admission that in Amos' times and before there was a popular eschatology. This will be the point of our attack in the following

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1. See his article, "Hebrew and Egyptian Apocalyptic Literature", HTR XVIII (1925), pp. 359f.

pages. We have noted some of the difficulties that lie in the way of such a consideration, but we have also noted some favorable conditions which would make a pre-prophetic, popular eschatology plausible. Our next step will be to analyze, insofar as possible, the prevalent mentality that was expressed in the popular cult with a view of understanding the sources of eschatology in ritualistic magic. Believing that a similar mentality concerning the future pervaded the whole of the Near East, we shall thus turn to a study of the cultural relations and popular religions of Egypt, Babylonia, and Canaan. Such an approach is validated by such a statement as this from the prominent archaeologist, S.A. Cook:[1]

> "It is necessary to recognize what Palestine as a whole shared with its neighbors if we are to understand what gives it its distinctiveness; and indeed we gain a more accurate and more impressive conception of the history of Palestinian religion only when we regard the land, as we must, as an integral part of the larger area with whose history and religion it was always and intimately bound up."

1. The Religion of Ancient Palestine in the Light of Archaeology, p. 4.

Chapter III

THE CULTURAL INTEGRITY OF THE NEAR EAST

For many years scholars have been divided upon the matter of the cultural origin of Hebrew institutions and ideas, one school of thought[1] insisting that the source of popular and prophetic conceptions is to be found in ancient Babylonia, the other school[2] insisting that the dominant cultural influence proceeded from Egypt. In the light of evidence adduced below, it seems that, rather than swinging to one extreme or the other, there is a tertium quid: namely, Palestine was a cultural milieu in which intermingled Sumerian, Akkadian, Egyptian, Hittite, Phoenician, Arabian, Canaanitic and many other cultural elements. To insist upon an "either-or" approach is to be guilty of an oversimplification of an exceedingly complex cultural problem. History is not so simple. To look for a single progenitor of culture is as absurd as looking for a single pair, an Adam and Eve, to be the progenitor of the human species. The discovery of the Galilean skull in a Paleolithic cave in Palestine[3] is testimony of the antiquity of man in Palestine and the activity of pre-historic cultural rivalries and influences in the Near East, a fact which leads Dr. Cook to sanely remark:

> "It is futile as a general principle to spend much time upon theories of origin and of specific sources of influence". (4)

Steering clear of the morass of extremism, we shall now consider the cultural interpenetration of both Babylonia and Egypt into Palestine, providing ourselves with a background to estimate their more specific influence upon the development of popular eschatology.

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1. The Pan-Babylonian school, championed by such men as Jastrow and Jeremias. For a further discussion of this position, see "Pan-Babylonianism" by Toy, C. H., HThR, III, pp. 47-84.
2. The Pan-Egyptologists, represented by E. Meyer, C.C.McCown, and favored by Gressmann.
3. Found in 1925 by Turville-Petre in a cave in the Wady el-'Amud of Palestine.
4. Cook, S. A., Archaeology and the Bible, p. 74.

A. Penetration Into Palestine

1. Babylonia

Not only does Hebrew tradition place its patriarchal origin in Ur of the Chaldees[1] but much historical evidence can be supplied to confirm the fact that the ancient Babylonian empire was a powerful cultural force throughout the Semitic Quadri-lateral.[2] The extraordinary vitality of ancient Babylonian civilization was the result of the intermixture of two heterogeneous races--a non-Semitic people known as the Sumerians and a Semitic people known as the Akkadians. Even before these groups were fused together Palestine seems to have been under the influence of Mesopotamia, so that Lugalzaggisi, a Sumerian king of Uruk (circa 2850 B. C.),[3] tells on a votive inscription that his conquests extended "from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof" and that Enlil had "made straight his paths from the Lower Sea (Persian Gulf) over the Euphrates and Tigris to the Upper Sea (Mediterannian)". Sargon of Akkad (circa 2600 B. C.) sought unification of Sumer and Akkad, established close relations with "Amurru",[4] and called his kingdom officially the kingdom of "the four quarters of the world". Gudea, ruler of Sumer (circa 2600 B. C.), brought lumber from the mountains of Amurru, or the Lebanon range. Finally, the great Hamurrabi (circa 1900 B. C.) completely unified Sumer and Akkad, and, longing for more worlds to conquer, turned his attention to Amurru, the possession of which would provide a "way to the sea" and a bridge to Egypt.

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1. Gen. 11:31. Also the Ras Shamra tablets mention the migration of the Terahites.
2. The ancient Babylonian empire is not to be confused with the Neo-Babylonian or Chaldean empire which devastated Judah in the time of Nebuchadrezzar (612-539 B. C.). This latter period was a period of disorganization in Israel's life and seems to be, at first glance, the more susceptive to Babylonian influence. However, this period, as Jastrow reminds us (Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions, p. 18), was one of rigidly established institutions, and we would expect greater cultural influence to take place in the earlier, more plastic stage of Israel's history.
3. Elsewhere called the "Westland" from its geographical position from Mesopotamia.
4. Gen. 10:10.

In fact, Hamurrabi, in an inscription on a stone plate which bears his likeness and is dedicated to the Westland Ishtar, calls himself "king of Mar-tu (Amurru)". These are but a few brief statements out of many which could be adduced to indicate the early political influence of ancient Babylonia upon Syro-Palestine, the continuing influence of which down into Israelitic history is possibly indicated by a reference to Amraphel, king of Shinar (Sumer), in Genesis.[1.]

Turning from the political influence of Babylonia to the more cultural aspect, archaeology has revealed abundant clues of cultural commerce between these countries. Discoveries at Tel el-Amarna have shown that in the fifteenth century B. C. the Babylonian cuneiform was the lingua franca of the day--the language of diplomatic and commercial affairs. A specific example of cultural influence is given to us in those letters by the fact that among the discovered tablets were legends of Sargon and other Babylonian myths which undoubtedly were used as copy exercises for Egyptian scribes in the mastery of the difficult cuneiform. Legal codes, which were so essential to Babylonian business,[2.] passed into currency, as is evident from the obvious influence upon the Old Testament of Babylonian legal codes. Likewise, the Babylonian system of weights and measures was used throughout this territory. When the Israelites came to Palestine, among the booty captured was "a beautiful mantle from Shinar",[3.] a biblical reference to the activity of Babylonian merchants. It seems indisputable that along with their wares, Babylonian merchants also passed on to Palestine and Egypt some of their religious myths, conceptions, and practices. Besides the affinities suggested between the code of Hamurrabi and Israel's legal code, Babylonian parallels to the Hebrew myths of the

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1. Gen. 14:1.
2. Section 9f. of the Code of Hamurrabi demands commerce to be done on a legal basis.
3. Jos. 7:21

creation, fall, the Babel tower, flood, as well as tree worship, fire worship, astral worship, and divination of all kinds, many scholars seek to identify the deities mentioned in Amos 5:27 with the Assyrio-Babylonian Kaimanu or Kaivanu. With all of these bonds uniting Mesopotamia with Palestine, we are justified in surveying Babylonian myth and ritual to see if there we might discover influences upon Israel's popular eschatology.

2. Egypt

As we turn to Egypt we find confirmation of the fact that the south also exerted a tremenduous influence upon the life of Palestine. Not only does Hebrew tradition lay much stress upon the Egyptian sojourn, but there is every reason to believe that Egyptian influence permeated the whole of Syro-Palestine. History certainly verifies this statement. The "oldest road in the world" leads from Egypt to Palestine,[1] a fact which would testify to constant intercourse between these two countries. Egyptian armies had marched across Palestine before 2500 B.C., and under the Empire there was a long period of military occupation to the very borders of the Euphrates. Also, for centuries the copper mines of Sinai were worked by Egyptians, for which purpose it was necessary to maintain a garrison.

Archaeology likewise demonstrates an intimacy of relationship between Egypt and Palestine. A letter of Hori indicates that one of the first prerequisites to becoming an Egyptian scribe was a full knowledge of Palestine.[2] Egyptian temples were built on the peninsula of Sinai, at Lacish (Tel el-Hesy),[3] at Gezer,[4] and Thutmose III and Ramses III tell of temples

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1. See Gardiner, A.,JEA VI, p. 99. This road follow approximately the same route of the new railroad between Egypt and Palestine.
2. Peet, CAH II, p. 225.
3. Dedicated to the goddess Hathor about 1500-2000 B.C. Cf. Bliss, A Mound of Many Cities.
4. As early as the reign of Thutmose III (circa 1475 B.C.) See Bliss, ibid.

of Amon in the land of Zahi, which is located in Canaan, to which

> ". . . the Asiatics of Retenu (i.e., Syria) came bearing their tribute before it, for it was divine". (1)

Among the Amarna letters is correspondence from the Palestinian city Dunip reminding the king of Egypt that "the gods of the king of the land of Egypt, our lord, dwell in Dunip",[2] and twice is there reference to the Hebrew people in Egyptian inscriptions.[3] This discussion could be elaborated to voluminous length with citations of other archaeological materials from art, pottery, and religion, which show indisputably close relationships between Egypt and Palestine in Israel's formative period.

Turning to the Bible, we find similar references to Egyptian influence. Whatever position we hold in regard to the Exodous, we have no right to deny the importance of that historical event which made such a deep and lasting impression upon the Hebrew consciousness. The very name "Moses" or "Mosheh", it is to be noted, is an Egyptian word for "child" appearing in Ramses, Ptahmose, Thutmose, Amenmose,[4] and other name compounds. Certainly the rite of circumcision which plays such an important part in the Bible was a cultural importation from Egypt, for we have proof from bodies exhumed from the earliest pre-historic cemeteries of Egypt of 4000 B. C. and earlier that the practice was carried on in Egypt then.[5] The serpent staff of Moses is probably a relic of Egyptian religion, for serpent worship was an important element

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1. Breasted, J. H., Ancient Records of Egypt, II, par. 455-458; IV, par. 219.
2. Cf. Knutzon, J. A., Die El-Amarna Tafeln, No. 59, ll. p. 9f.
3. The Amarna tablets mention the invading "Habiru", and the stele of Mernephtah mentions "Israel".
4. Some suggest that originally the name of the Biblical Moses was compounded with an Egyptian deity.
5. On an Egyptian tomb relief of the twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth century B. C., from the burial ground of Memphis, we have a depiction of an Egyptian surgeon performing the operation of circumcision.

in Egyptian culture as a magical charm.[1] Literary affinities also appear between Egyptian documents and Hebrew wisdom literature. The most startling similarity is to be found between the Hymn of Ikhnaton and Psalm 104.[2] Erman some time ago observed the parallels between the wisdom of Amem-em-ope and Proverbs 22:15, 24, 22, although he traced the influence to the Persian period. Resemblances have also been observed between Canticles and Egyptian love-poetry; between the Egyptian document of "The Dialogue of the Man-weary-of-life with his Soul" and Job; between the character of the faithless wife in the Joseph stories and the Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers".

Such facts as these, chosen out of many which could be recruited, seem to be cogent demonstration that the whole of the Near East was a milieu of intermingling cultural forces, emanating from many centers--notably Mesopotamia and Egypt--and focusing upon the strategically located territory which we have designated as Syro-Palestine. To say that Israel remained aloof from the cultural cross-currents which swept through the land is to beg the question. Cultural isolation is impossible, especially in such a locale as Palestine. Breasted sums up the importance of neighboring cultures in the nurture of Israel:[3]

> "Geographically, it (Palestine) lay on a narrow natural bridge between the Mediterranean Sea on the one hand and the Arabian desert on the other--an intercontinental bridge which had formed the highway connecting Africa and Asia from pre-historic times. Politically, Palestine was in antiquity, as it still is today, an international football. Culturally, as we have just been observing, it was within the commercial territory so long dominated by Babylonian business, while at the same time it lay directly under the eaves of the great structure of Egyptian civilization."

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1. Consider the healing potency of the serpent set up by Moses in the wilderness for all of those who bowed before it. This serpent image played a very important part in Hebrew religion until its removal from the temple by Hezekiah. II Kings 18:4.
2. Cf. Breasted, J. H., History of Ancient Egypt, 2nd edition, 1916, pp. 374f.
3. Breasted, J. H., The Dawn of Conscience, p. 347.

Although the consideration of such material as this seems, at first glance, to be a deviation from our central purpose, deeper consideration will make apparent the fact that we are now prepared through such discussion to make a statement which is most important in the consideration of the development of eschatology in general and the concept of the Day of Jahweh in particular. Such facts as these have established the possibility of popular religion being affected by the general culture. Now we proceed to consider the specific character of popular religion throughout this territory, noting especially the resemblances between myth and ritual in Babylonia, Egypt, and Canaan.

B. Similarities of Popular Religions: Myth and Ritual

To speak of Israel's dependence upon her cultural neighbors in such matters as art, literature, and customs is to say much, but to leave the most important thing unsaid. Political and social relationships were influential, but were always encompassed by religion, for religion was the most powerful motivating and integrating force of antiquity. Cultural influence is never adopted officially but usually works as an unconscious leaven through the popular ranks, and, since religion was so vital in human life, we may be sure that almost on a priori grounds there would be a great tendency for the populace to adopt and adapt religious elements.

The two most essential features of ancient religion were myth and ritual. It is here that we may look to discern cultural interpenetration. No doubt the ritualistic phases of religion may be attributed to the more primitive times, since a sequence of vague and sub-rational priestly acts constitutes the simplest possible reduction of religion. However, as time went on, man's incipient rationalism could not remain satisfied with the ambiguous priestly forms and sought to put a naively rationalistic content into those forms and techniques by uniting them with mythology. Mythology, although defined in

numerous ways, is in essence man's earliest attempt at philosophy--that is, it represents incipient rationalism. It is "a document of human thought in the embryo".[1] As far back as historical inquiry is able to reach into the past, we find man seeking to understand the baffling universe as it presents itself to his limited vision through mythology. Thus Sir James Frazer has defined a myth as man's

> "....first attempt to answer those general questions concerning the world which have doubtless obtruded themselves on the human mind from the earliest times and will continue to occupy it to the last." (2)

Since even a primitive man's nature demands that he have at least a partial answer to the mystery of life, mythology provided a certain rationale of existence.

A second thing to observe about religion as expressed in myth and ritual is that it not only provided a rationalistic coherency to life, but, more important, it provided a raison d'etre--a motivation for living. The dominant mood pervading the atmosphere of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Syro-Palestine[3] was one of intense and anxious concern about the future. Men of those remote days lived in a capricious universe--not the scientifically predictable and law-abiding universe of our observation--and therefore the thing of which they were most realistically aware was the unpredictable factors of life. Forces of environment and circumstance were pitted against the welfare of humanity. There was the whole uncertainty of fertility, the whole unstability of international politics which cast a pall over national perpetuity, and, in such a world as that, even the simplest acts of an individual often led to unforseen and undesirable consequences. No mere sense of rationalistic order could explain away the urgent necessities of life. Man, reduced to the point of desperation, had to have power by which he could pro-

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1. Frazer, Sir James Myths of the Origin of Fire, p. vi
2. Ibid, p. vi
3. See Hooke, Myth and Ritual, chapter I.

tect his life in a hostile environment. He had to avail himself of some power with which he could direct the uncertain course of the future in the interests of humanity. Early religion provided this force, so that through myth and ritual man attempted to control his future. Such a consideration as this begins to anticipate the importance of religion in the life of the common people of antiquity, so that wherever there was intimate cultural intercourse, as between Palestine and her neighbors, the popular religion would be most susceptible to influence.

The power that was released through religion for the protection and renewal of life was the force of magic--ritualistic magic. This attitude will become yet clearer to us when we realize that, according to the conception of the times, the force of magic was something that existed per se, that is, exclusive of both gods and men. Consequently, by using the potency of magic man could not only assist the gods who were only partially powerful over the destinies of men, but in many instances could determine their actions in the interests of men. The presence of the mythological narrative in religion assumes great importance when we recall Hooke's suggestion that in these early ritual patterns the spoken word had the very efficacy of an act.[1] Thus the ritualistic narration of myth accompanied by certain ritualistic enactments placed a doubly powerful control upon the future in terms of sympathetic magic, so that the pious worshipper could believe himself to be participating in a drama of the future as it was inevitably to be.

Because of a sense of economic uncertainty which dominated the entire Near East, Hooke reacts vigorously against any attempt to localize the home of culture or religion in any one place.[2] He says:

> "We are on sure ground in asserting that there is abundant evidence for the interchange of many culture elements throughout the ancient East."

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1. Op. cit, p. 3
2. Ibid, p. 4

Thus he posits the possibility of these "ritual patterns" and their associated myths migrating between several civilizations, so that it is possible to trace them not only in Babylonia and Egypt, but also in Canaan and among the Hebrews. Necessity knows no preference for any particular nation's traditional conceptions. In such an atmosphere as that of antiquity, the populace tended to borrow, adapt, and exchange the elements of myth and ritual which are most enriching to life.

The central feature of such religion was the relationship of the king, who personified the community, with the deity. Ritual thus represents the things done by the king and to the king in order that he might, through the instrumentality of coercive magic, secure prosperity and welfare for the immediate future. Hooke has traced the following elements of a ritualistic drama which was no doubt enacted at the great religious festivals of the year:[1]

(1) The dramatic representation of the death and resurrection of the god.

(2) The recitation or symbolic representation of the myth of creation.

(3) The divine combat, in which the triumph of the god over his enemies was ritualized.

(4) The sacred marriage.

(5) The triumphal procession, in which the king represents the epiphany of the god and his public manifestation as victorious and vested with full control of the destinies of his people for the year.

The thread of meaning which runs through all of this, however, is the obsession of the future. It will not be our purpose to consider each of these elements in detail, but we shall, by considering briefly the religion of Babylonia, Egypt, and Canaan, consider the general bearing of such religion upon the development and character of popular eschatology.

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1. Op. cit., p. 8

1. The Babylonian Creation Myth

Although in the case of Babylonia religious traditions were withheld from circulation and therefore appear documented at a very late date, it is certain from their character and supporting archaeological evidence that very early in Babylonia a religion was practiced whose dominant obsession was the future. As in the case of all ancient peoples, Babylonian civilization was in very close touch with the soil. It seems likely, then, that the religion of the people was one which, through the force of ritualistic magic, sought to influence the seasonal cycle so that the future would favor them with increase and happiness. Following very closely the spirit of the Tammuz myth, we find the following ritualistic scheme taking place, primarily during a festival known as akitu or the New Year Festival.

The festival opens with an elaborate ritualistic prelude in which the god, Bel-Marduk, is praised for his past victories over the enemies of the great gods and is implored to give favor to Babylon, E-sagil--his temple, and the people. Bel's wife, Beltis, is implored to plead with Marduk for the life and prosperity of the king and the Babylonians, and for his aid against all enemies, natural and supernatural, who might menace Babylon. In order to recall Marduk's past victory and to assure a similar victory in the future, the myth enuma elish[1] was recited in full by the high-priest as he stood before the image of Marduk. So influencial was this myth upon Hebrew literature and liturgy that a brief consideration of its contents will be profitable.

The scene opens with a picture of utter desolation and chaos. Nothing existed but the primeval waters, personified by Apsu, Mummu, and Tiamat. By the mingling together of these primeval waters, in which were male and

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1. This title is taken from the first two words of the myth, "when above". A similar phenomenon is found in the names of certain Old Testament books, e.g. Bereshith.

female elements, the gods were born. Strife arose, however, and the god Ea overcame Apsu and Mummu, leaving only the female monster Tiamat. Resolving to be avenged for the slaying of her Husband Apsu, Tiamat spawned a hideous brood of monsters, with which, led by Kingu, her consort, she went forth to battle. At the sight of such an imposing host, the gods were paralyzed with panic. Even Ea was powerless, and the gods began to seek feverishly for a champion. Such a champion was found in Marduk, who consented to battle only on the condition that the gods should cede to him supreme control over the destiny of the future. The request granted, Marduk prepared for battle, and, armed with a bow and arrow, a spear, a thunderbolt, a net, and the seven winds, he advanced for battle. Triumphantly he overcame the dragon Tiamat by catching her in his net, forcing down her throat the seven winds, and finally piercing her inward parts. Splitting the gigantic body in two, he made out of one half the firmament and out of the other half the earth, setting a bolt so that the upper waters could not mingle once again with the lower. The poem ends with the gods praising Marduk as king, and, desirous of rewarding him for his victory and his various acts of creation, building at his desire the city of Babylon and his Temple, E-sagil. Each year the ritual represented the gods congregating together in the Festival House, glorifying Marduk, and decreeing a new "fate of supremacy" for him during the coming year, or, no doubt, for his earthly vicegerent, the king of Babylon.

The New Year Festival proceeded, with other ritualistic activities, until the culmination of the festival was reached: namely, the triumphal procession. In this procession the king "took the hand of Bel", which is to say, he led the statue of Bel in the procession, to the accompaniment of hymns of triumph and much rejoicing.

Our texts of this Babylonian festival are incomplete. Although there is no trace of it in the above mythology, it is likely that an important part

of the ritual was the death and resurrection of Marduk after the spirit of the Tammuz myth. Several scanty fragments provide clues for such a claim. In a recently published text there is a hint of Tiamat's victory over Marduk,[1] as a result of which Marduk was imprisoned in the mountain or realm of the dead, smitten, wounded, and deprived of his clothing. After Marduk's disappearance, the city fell into strife and mourning, until at last he was brought back by the anxious efforts of his wife, Beltis, who stood at the door of the tomb bewailing his death until the gods, heeding her entreaties, bored a hole in the door and released him. In one place in the enuma elish there is a reference to the fact that Marduk was a son of the Sun-god, a fact which would seem to classify him as a year-god whose victory was dependent upon the waxing and waning of the sun or the seasonal cycle.

Enough has been said in this brief way to indicate the fact that the popular religion of the temples of Babylonia embraced myth and ritual, the chief characteristic of which was a desperate concern about the future. Living in an agricultural environment in which the fertility of the soil was uncertain and in a political environment in which the ascendency of Marduk was menaced internally and externally, the community sought to gain through cultic participation a certain control over that future. Myth was more than poetry and ritual was more than pious ceremony. The mere narration of the myths associated with Marduk placed a magical coercion upon the future; the mere enactment of the ritualistic drama was to the worshipper a veritable participation in the drama of the future itself. Noting the character of such magical religion, C.G. Gadd says:[2]

> "....The recitation of the triumphs of Bel was to bring about those triumphs and the annual benefits for which they stood.....Beyond it is all the effort of mankind to escape from, or at least make tolerable, an environment which the thoughtful Babylonian felt, as poignantly as any modern, was ordered without any reference either to his happiness or to his moral notions."

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1. Op. cit., p.
2. Ibid, pp. 62, 67.

2. The Egyptian Osiris-Horus Myth.

Turning to Egypt we find popular religion obsessed by the same concern about the future. Any casual glance at a map of Egypt will indicate that inhabited Egypt is little more than a narrow strip of land hugging the shores of the Nile, upon whose periodical flood it depended for fertility. Once again in Egypt we find the people resorting to the priestly patterns of myth and ritual in order to influence the uncertainties of the future.

The myth which played an important part in Egyptian religion was the Osiris-Horus myth. Here again in this myth the gods' ancestry is traceable to the primordial waters, from which sprang the Sun-god, the ancestor of all the gods. Upon the accession of Osiris to the throne of Egypt, the envy of Sēth, his brother, was so aroused that he killed him. The wife of Osiris, Isis, not knowing where her husband's dead body was, searched up and down Egypt until at last she found it and crouched beside it in lamentation. Rē, the Sun god, took pity upon the sorrowful Isis and sent Anubis, the funerary god, to bury Osiris, but Isis resuscitated the dead god by causing breath to enter in him with her wings. Osiris and Isis had intercourse, and Isis conceived a son Horus, who, in his manhood, challenged Sēth and thus avenged his father. However, in the battle, Sēth wrenched one of Horus' eyes from its socket. This eye was made whole by Thōth, the god of wisdom, who spit upon it, made peace between the two, and restored it to Horus. Upon receiving it, Horus gave it to his father, Osiris, to eat, and the latter, because the eye contained something of the owner's soul and life, became mighty. Yet Sēth still challenged Horus and brought accusation against Osiris. The whole matter was settled only when the case was brought before the congregation of the gods and Thōth, pleading his cause, made Osiris "true of voice", i.e. victorious.

Such a myth was also accompanied by elaborate ritual, as in the case of Babylonia, centering around the importance of the king for the life of the community. Throughout all of the ceremony the king was identified with Horus so that he became a virtual deity with the relationship of Horus to Osiris, or son to father. The ritual, in this case also, consisted of things done by and to the king--the ritual combat, the death and resurrection of the god, the sacred marriage, the triumphant procession, in which the resuscitated god was carried around the walls of Memphis in celebration of the accession of the king.

An important part of the ceremony was the narration of a creation drama, and most inviting is the possibility that similar mythological imagery was called into usage in Egypt as in Babylonia. Although the snake in Egyptian mythology is a benevolent deity for the most part, one cannot but notice a suggestion of the primeval snake or dragon in a passage which Brugsch quotes from one of the monuments:[1.]

> "In the beginning there was neither Heaven nor Earth. Enveloped in thick darkness the boundless primeval Deep (Nun) filled the "All" (Universe); this primeval deep secreted in its depth the male and female germs (or beginnings) of the future world; the Divine primeval Spirit, inseparable from the original matter of the primeval Deep, experienced the desire of creative activity, and his word called the world into being--the world, the appearance and manifold forms of which had beforehand been mirrored in his eye. . . The first act of Creation began with the formation of an Egg from the primeval Deep, out of which Daylight (Ra), the immediate cause of life in the domain of the terrestial sphere, came forth."

Also, as the priests of Amon seek to tell of the victories of Amon, similar to the priests of Babylon, they tell in myth of his combat with the serpent Apophis:[2.]

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1. Brugsch, Religion und Wythologie der alten Aegypter, p. 101.
2. Jeremias, A., The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East, Vol. 1; p. 101.

> "His hosts rejoice when they behold how the enemy (the serpent) is fallen, how his members are flayed with the knife, how the fire has devoured him. . . the gods rejoice, the hosts of Re are glad".

Whether such a myth migrated from Babylonia or whether such mythology[1] is merely the result of people responding to the stimulus of the same kind of environment[2] makes little difference for the central point necessary for our consideration. The important fact is that the myth and ritual of the popular religion of Egypt was vitally concerned about the future. The disappearance of vegetation due to inundation and the renewal of vegetation following the receding of the waters--a natural process upon which life itself depended--were dramatically represented by the death, burial, and resurrection of Osiris. The narrated past victories of the god--victories of creation, victories in the political unification of the land of the Nile--when recited, exerted a certain determination that similar victories would ensue in the future. The triumphal accession of the deity to the throne was only a dramatic representation of the fact that for another year the divine king had ascended the throne to pass on to his subjects the life, prosperity, and health which he shared with the deity.

3. The Canaanitic Myth of Alein-Baal

Because of the cultural integrity of the Near East and the cross-currents of civilizations which met in Palestine, we have been led to expect that the religion of Canaan corresponds to a great degree to the general character of religion as manifested in Babylonia and Egypt. Until the recent excavations at Byblos and the discoveries at Ras Shamra, this was little more than a venture based upon certain precarious Old Testament allusions and late Greek writers. Putting all contributing evidence together, however,

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1. Hooke calls attention to the definite evidence of migration of myth and ritual fragments, op cit p. 4.
2. Cf. Oesterley, W. O. E., The Development of the Messianic Idea.

it is now possible to reconstruct to a much greater degree the popular religion that flourished in Canaan when the invading Hebrews came under its influence.

Adapting the seasonal festal celebrations, the pattern of which we have traced in the Babylonian and Egyptian festivals, we find the Canaanites seeking, through the power of ritualistic magic, to coerce from their uncertain environment the things which were needed to make life bearable. Here in Canaan there was the same importance attached to the king--an importance which amounted, no doubt, to virtual deification.[1] In an elaborate system of sacrifice and ritualistic acts, the people sought, through the king, to enter into close relationship with the deity so that the anxiety of the future might be relieved.

Without considering in detail the elaborate myth and ritual pattern which is increasingly coming to light, we may consider the Alein-Baal myth of the Ras Shamra tablets as illustrative of the economic motif which ran throughout the popular religion of Canaan's agricultural environment, the dominant characteristic of which was the dying and rising vegetation god. The myth was narrated in liturgical ceremony, as is clearly evident from its strophic form.[2]

The myth begins with the account of the building of a temple in the Heights of the North for Alein-Baal by the gracious permission of the supreme god, El,"The Source of Waters". The temple completed, a great feast is prepared for the gods and Baal is acclaimed as king and judge, just as

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1. Hooke calls attention to the fact that the altar and steps of the high place discovered at Petra probably formed a part of the deification ritual, just as a similar rock ladder was used in Egypt for the same purpose. Op. cit., p. 72.
2. Furthermore, at certain junctures in the text, indication is made that the narrator was to recite materials which were not recorded in the text before him, while in one portion we have a rubric instructing the narrator to repeat the preceeding material five times.

was done by the gods in the case of Marduk. But Mot, the god of death, becomes jealous of the boastful god of life and challenges him. Alein-Baal is warned by Anat, his sister-wife, against Mot but Baal menaces him in these words:[1.]

> "I will pierce you with my lance,
> As you have crushed Lotan the fleeing serpent,
> As you have destroyed the tortuous serpent,
> The powerful one with seven heads."

Virolleaud identifies this Lotan with the Leviathan of the Old Testament, striking confirmation of which is given by the fact that in both the Biblical and Ras Shamra texts the identical adjectives are used to describe the monster.[2.] Here we seem to have a fragment of a floating myth which concerned the battle with a monster of the primeval deep. We would not expect this myth to take the same form in each of the countries of antiquity, but its mere presence in the ritual of popular religion witnesses to the cultural integrity of the Near East.

Mot slays Alein-Baal and carries him to Sheol, "the land of no return", and darkness and sterility spread over the land. Anat, Baal's consort, goes to Mot to ask for her husband-brother, and, when only derided, she seizes Mot in infuriation and demolishes him. She descends into the earth where she weeps beside the lifeless body of her husband until Shapesh, responding to her request, puts the dead Alein upon her shoulders so that she might carry him unto the Heights of the North. There, after she has buried him in a pit, she sacrifices animals over his grave that the lifeless body

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1. Compare Is. 27:1--
> "In that day Jahweh with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish Leviathan the swift serpent, even Leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

2. brḥ (בָּרַח)--"swift" and 'qltn (עֲקַלָּתוֹן)--"crooked". The word for "dragon" which occurs in Is. 27:1 is also mentioned in the same Ras Shamra text, an excerpt of which is quoted above.

of Alein might absorb their life-blood and thus be revived. No account of the resurrection of Alein-Baal has yet been discovered, although it seems obvious that this myth conformed to the widely spread Tammuz myth in that regard.

Certain Old Testament prohibitions also provide clues as to the nature of Canaanitic religion. The prohibition against seething a kid in its mother's milk[1] has been interpreted by some scholars, in the light of Ras Shamra discoveries, as a definite prohibition against the deification of the king, with which such a rite was connected. The prohibition against the qedeshim and qedeshoth[2] seems to indicate that a definite aspect of Canaanitic religion was the sacred marriage, consummated through such prostitution[3], and whose object was the production of unrestrained fertility.

Enough has been indicated to provide a conception of the kind of religion which dominated Canaan at the time of the Hebrew invasion. We have noted the relation of this myth to the Babylonian Tiamat myth and the Egyptian myth concerning Osiris-Horus and Sēth. Other affinities with the popular religions of these neighboring countries are to be found in the building of the temple, the triumphal procession celebrating the accession of the king, and the sacred marriage. Here we have, no doubt, a seven day New Year festival based upon magic and whose dominant concern was the determining of the future in the welfare of the community.

C. Conclusion: Incipient Eschatology

We may now proceed to deduce our conclusions in regard to eschatology based upon the study of this chapter. We have found that, due to the inti-

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1. Exodous 23:19; 34:26; Dt. 14:21.
2. Dt. 23:17.
3. The importance of prostitution as an element of fertility magic is treated by May, H. G., in reference to the cultic background of Hosea. See "The Fertility Cult in Hosea", AJSL, XLVIII (1932)

macy of relationship between the civilizations of the Near East, as confirmed by archaeological, historical, and Biblical evidence, there is abundant possibility for a similar intimacy to have existed in the sphere of religion, or, more specifically, in regard to myth and ritual. Turning, therefore, to the religion of Babylonia, Egypt, and Canaan we found such similarity, especially in regard to the prevalent attitude toward the future. If not a thorough-going eschatology based upon magic and miracle, at least we found the religious mentality favorable to eschatological thinking.

The history of the Near East testifies to the fact that men lived in two areas of life where existence was uncertain and unpredictable: the economic sphere, in which capricious forces menaced the regularity of the seasonal cycle; and the political, in which political security was always being challenged by men's enterprising rivalries. As men sought to control this capricious future in their interests by employing the powerful force of magic, we at least observe a future immediacy which is consummated in a miraculous, almost apocalyptical fashion. The kind of mentality which thinks in terms of magic, miracle, and the supernatural is the mentality which is required in the development of eschatology, yet whether this future immediacy which obsessed men's lives from season to season and year to year had become converted into the more advanced view of future ultimacy is a real question and a very debatable one.

Some scholars there are who believe that they have found evidences of the step being taken toward such a thorough-going eschatology. Gressmann, as we have noted, believes that all of Semitic antiquity was dominated by an eschatological scheme--the motifs of Unheilseschatologie and Heilseschatologie. Oesterley sees in the figure of Marduk the character of a Heilbringer who, because he was granted the control of destiny by the gods, was believed to finally establish, through his representative king, an era of complete deliv-

arence from all of the Tiamat-like forces of evil and suffering.[1] Some scholars,[2] in the wake of Eduard Meyer, have found in the thought of the great Egyptian social prophets a developed apocalyptic which anticipated the coming of a reign of peace in which all menacing Asiatics would be completely banished by a king-deliverer and a reign of justice would be inaugurated when

"Righteousness shall return to its place,
Unrighteousness shall be cast out." (3)

Whether or not such contentions are correct is beyond the scope of this paper, only insofar as to show, as has been attempted, that there was a plausible possibility for such. Gressmann's position, although admirably defended, is by no means accepted unanimously by scholars, and the so-called Messianic thinking of Egypt has been accused by eminent scholars of referring merely to the immediate present rather than to the ultimate future.

Our conclusion can be that we have, as is evident from the general character of the popular cult, incipient eschatology at the very minimum. The transformation of incipient eschatology into thorough-going eschatology would mean that men's thinking would have to have been lifted from the realm of nature, where the immediate future is man's dominant concern, to the realm of history, in which men would tend more naturally to think in terms of a series of events and their final consummation. The two great river valleys of the Nile and the Euphrates and the agricultural concern of Canaan would make these nations almost predetermined to think in terms of nature. Whether or not such advanced thinking as is involved in an eschatological view of history can be attributed to them is doubtful, but beyond our present concern. At least in their popular religions is an obsession of the future which, because of emphasis upon magic, miracle and the supernatural, contained the seeds of eschatology.

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1. Oesterley, W. O. E., op. cit.
2. McCown, C. C., "Hebrew and Egyptian Apocalyptic Literature", HTR 18, 1925, pp. 357-411.
3. Cf. Breasted, J. H., op. cit., p. 204.

We have noted earlier,[1] however, some of the factors which almost predetermined Israel to think in terms of history and thus eschatology. We shall next turn to a consideration of Israel's religion in relation to the general relgious mentality of the Near East.

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1. See above, pp. 24f.

Chapter IV

ISRAEL'S POPULAR RELIGION

A. Syncretism in Hebrew Popular Religion

One of the most widely observed facts among scholars of the Old Testament is the Hebrew's temptation of syncretism upon entering into Canaan. Coming from a distinctly nomadic background to the "fertile crescent", across which, as we have been observing, swept the tides of civilization and culture, they immediately became aware of the fact that they were facing a new situation in which the old nomadic forms of religion were sadly deficient. From a nomadic economy they came into an agricultural economy in which they were forced to deal with the grim necessities of survival in such an environment.

The consequence was that this whole period of transition was one of great stress and strain upon Israel's nomadic ideals. Two alternatives faced the Israelites as they met this new situation. On the one hand, they could completely compromise with the magical popular religion of the Near East, and there is much reason to believe that the populace in economic desperation did this, believing that the gods who were attached to the new land must be worshipped to guarantee existence. On the other hand, they could adapt their nomadic religion to the new agricultural situation, effecting drastic changes in it, but retaining much of its nomadic character--and it was the prophetic element, we may be sure, which championed this latter policy.

From a study of the Old Testament itself it is very difficult to determine the character of popular religion, since so much of the evidence has been changed or expunged by late editors. The Old Testament is a minority book which was re-worked by a series of editorial processes which lasted down to its very canonization, so that, in many cases, earlier beliefs have been completely removed in order that the book might conform to the more lofty views of a later age. Therefore, in seeking to understand what form popular religion

took upon entrance into Canaan, we run a far greater danger of understating than of overstating the facts of the case. The study of the popular religion of the Near East which archaeology makes possible has given new insight into the nature of the Hebrew religion, so that even the Old Testament can provide clues which make possible a reconstruction of popular religion along the lines of the prevailing cult pattern.

B. The Coronation Festival of Jahweh

Undoubtedly the most important scholar in the field of the understanding of Israel's popular religion of the pre-exilic period is Mowinckel, who, in his very exhaustive study of the Psalms,[1] has laid the foundations for the reconstruction of a ritualistic and mythical pattern, the nature of which we have had occasion to observe in the cases of Babylonia, Egypt, and Canaan. The Psalms, it is to be observed, are fragments of ritual in which the priestly or popular spirit is much more prevalent than the radical, prophetic spirit. Since there is a conservative inertia in ritual, which, in reverence for the past, stands out against change, we are stepping out on comparatively safe ground, says Mowinckel, in asserting that many of the Psalms formed the essential part of pre-exilic ritual and worship. In the study of the Psalms, therefore, we are likely to come to an understanding of the popular mentality with which Amos in his day was dealing and to discover some indications of what was going on in the elaborate temple festivals of the eighth century B.C.

Mowinckel, in his study of the Psalms and the cult festivals with which they were connected, was led to discover in them a popular eschatology based upon ritualistic magic. Just as the ancient Babylonians, Egyptians, and Canaanites sought to control a hazardous future through the potency of ritual as enacted at certain festivals (usually New Year Festivals), so a similar

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1. Of the six volumes of his Psalmenstudien, the second volume is important in this regard: Das Thronbesteigungsfest Jahwäs und der Ursprung der Eschatologie.

objective dominated the Sukkoth Festival, or, as it is called more familiarly, "The Feast of Ingathering". The importance of this Festival lies in the fact that, according to Exodous 23:16, it was celebrated "at the going out of the year" or again, according to Exodous 34:22, "at the turn of the year"--that is, when the old seasonal period had concluded and men became conscious of the future in a realistic sense. That it was the most important ritualistic feast in the Hebrew calendar is indicated by the fact that it is spoken of as the Feast--that is, the hag par excellence.[1] The striking similarity of the Sukkoth Festival to the Babylonian akitu and the Egyptian festivals is only another testimony to the intermingling of cultural relationships in the Near East.

As Mowinckel has observed, the most important element of the Hebrew festival is the Kingship of Jahweh. We have noted how in the ritual drama of both Egypt and Babylonia one god was acclaimed as supreme, and how the king, acting in the very role of the deity, ascended the throne in acknowledgment of the deity's lordship of creation and his supremacy over all enemies. While Babylonians held this New Year Festival in honor of Marduk, and Egyptians held their similar festival in honor of Osiris, the Israelites naturally exalted Jahweh as their King at the Sukkoth. Therefore Mowinckel calls the festival the Thronbesteigungsfest Jahwäs, that is, the "Ascension Feast of Jahweh" or the "Coronation Festival of Jahweh". Likewise, in the case of the Hebrews, Jahweh's Kingship in the future is based on the fact of his creatorship in the past which involved his conquest of the enemies of the primeval abyss. It was at this point that the Hebrews also interjected the agricultural emphasis which, as we have noted in the case of the Canaanites, was so important for an inhabitant of Palestine. Because of the fact that Jahweh had control over the powers of creation in the past, at the "turn of the year"

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1. Cf. Ex. 23:16; 24:22; Is. 30:29.

they could also be assured that He would, by an act of His will, recreate the land buried beneath fallow summer soils and thus bring about abundance and fertility in the future. Likewise was involved the belief that because He had been triumphant in the past over opposing enemies such as the Egyptians and Philistines, He would in the future reign triumphant over all political enemies. There is every reason to believe, according to Mowinchel, that a kind of a liturgical drama took place at this time of the year which was invested with great magical efficacy.

As Gressmann points out, the deification of the king which was so prevalent in Babylonia, Egypt, and Assyria is conspicuously absent in the case of the kings of Israel and Judah.[1] Oesterley suggests, however, that it is probable that such a deification did take place in earlier Israel, but, due to strong prophetic reaction, all direct evidences have been eradicated from the Hebrew tradition. Certainly the Hebrews were acquainted with the conception of the god-king,[2] and it is altogether possible that a few Psalms, because of close association of the king with the deity, provide clues of such deification.[3] On the other hand, it is to be argued that because of a strong nomadic background, in which a democratic spirit would protest against such elevation of a single person, even popular religion may have refused to accept such a belief. At any rate, a most important feature of the ritual was the proclamation of Jahweh as king, and it is altogether probable that some of the Psalms listed below were liturgical songs used to sing of Jahweh's accession to His throne:

> "Jahweh is become king, clothed in majesty"
> "For Jahweh is a great God, a king above all gods".(95:3).
> "Declare ye among the nations, Jahweh reigneth"(96:10).
> "Jahweh reigneth, let the earth rejoice" (97:1).
> "Jahweh reigneth, let the peoples tremble" (99:1). (4)

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1. Oesterley, W. O. E., op. cit. p. 126.
2. Ez. 28:1-14
3. Ps. 2; 89:3-4, 5-18; 110; 132.
4. Cf. Ps. 47:2, 7, 8; 48:2.

Another element of the liturgy was the theme of thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth.[1] Psalm 65 provides an excellent example of this. Beginning with a reference to God's presence in Zion, his Temple, and to his creative power in the stilling of the noise of the seas, the psalm continues:

"Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it,
Thou greatly enrichest it.
The brook of God is full of Water;
Thou providest their corn,
Yea, for this purpose thou preparest it.
Thou waterest her furrows,
Thou makest level the ridges thereof;
Thou dost soften it with rain,
Thou blessest the shooting-up thereof.
Thou crownest the year with thy goodness
And thy paths drop fatness".

The consciousness of Jahweh's creative power which in past years he had exercised to bring forth the abundance of the earth, brings to the Hebrew's consciousness the creatorship of Jahweh, the ritualistic enactment of which forms one of the most important acts of the whole Festival. In order to conceive of Jahweh's creative powers, once again the Hebrew resorts to the myth of the primeval serpent which we have found current in Babylonia, Egypt, and Canaan. The fact that Jahweh's Kingship was based upon his action in the primeval abyss is clearly indicated in Psalm 74:12-17:

"God is my King from of old,
Who wrought victory in the midst of the earth.
Through thy power thou didst divide the sea,
Thou didst crush the heads of the dragons upon
the waters.
Thou didst smash the heads of Leviathan,
Thou wilt give him for food,--for food to the
demons of the desert;
Thou didst cleave fountain and flood;
Thou didst dry up ancient rivers.
Day and night are both thine;
Thou didst establish sun and moon.
Thou didst fix all the bounds of the earth;
Thou didst make both summer and winter."

Although it is true that we have no direct evidence that there was actually a ritualistic combat enacted at such a festival, as was the case with the other

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1. Ps. 65; 67; 85; 126.

nations of our study, nevertheless the prevalence of this myth material and allusion to it as though it were common knowledge, seems to lead to that conclusion. In fact, it is possible for us to piece together the entire dragon myth of Babylonia from its mention in the Old Testament:[1.]

> Before the creation of the world there existed only the primeval abyss, Tehom (Tiamat) (Gen. 1:2). A brood of monsters came into being over whom Tiamat ruled (Ps. 74:13; 89:10-11). Jahweh challenges the sea monsters (Is. 30:7; 51:9-10; Ps. 75:12-15; 89:9-11; Job 26:10ff). Jahweh's weapons are bows and arrows, a net, thunderbolts, a sword (Is. 27:1 The winds which hover over the abyss are his weapons (Gen. 1:2). He bares his "arm" (Is. 51:9; Ps. 89:10) and draws his flashing "sword"(Is. 27:1). Tiamat is cloven in twain (Is. 51:9-10). Half of her body becomes the dry land (Gen. 1:7), the other becomes a "covering for the heavens" before which he draws a bolt, (Gen. 7:11; cf. Ps. 148:4) places guards, and charges them not to let the waters out (LXX of Job 26:13). At this conquest, the gods "shouted"(Job 38:7; cf. Ps. 89:16) just as at Marduk's victory the gods shouted "Marduk is King".[2.]

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1. Gunkel, in his Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit, lists the following allusions to the Dragon or Serpent myth:

   Rahab: Is. 51:9f; Ps. 89:10-15; Job 26:12f; Job 9:13; Ps. 87:4; Is. 30:7; Ps. 40:5

   Leviathan: Ps. 74:12-19; Is. 27:1; Job 40:25-41:26; Ps. 104:25f; Job 3:8

   Behemoth: Job 40:19-24; Enoch 60:7-9; Esra 6:49-52; Is. 30:6; Ps. 68:31

   "The Dragon in the Sea": Job 7:12; Ps. 44:20; Ez. 29:3-6; 32:2-8; Jer. 51:34,36,42; Amos 9:2f.

   "The Sea": Ps. 104:5-9; Job 38:8-11; Prov. 8:22-31; Jer. 5:22; 31:35; Ps. 33:6; Is. 50:2f.

   Other Allusions: Ps. 46; Is. 7:12-14; Hab. 3:8; Nah. 1:4; Ps. 18: 16-18; Ps. 93:3f; Ps. 77:17; Ps. 106:9; Ex. 15:7; Is. 59: 15-20.

2. Oesterley suggests that Ps. 89:16--"Blessed is the people that know the joyful shout" is an allusion to the terrific shout that went up after Marduk's triumph, "Marduk is King". It seems to me highly likely that this was a ritualistic cry in the enacted drama of the creation and the "blessed people" are those who know the shout: "Jahweh is King". This further attests to the factor of the Divine Kingship in the liturgical drama. See Oesterley, op. cit., p. 76.

There seems to be one striking point, however, at which the Hebrew myth of the primeval serpent differed, and herein lies a point of great importance for our consideration of eschatology. Whereas in the Babylonian epic, Tiamat was completely slain, the account which the Hebrew version of the myth seems to preserve is that the monster was merely "imprisoned", "conquered", "subdued", "humiliated". So in Psalms 89:9 (10), in spite of the fact that Jahweh has broken Rahab in pieces, the "sea" still rises up and Jahweh must exercise His power to still the waves;[1] so in Job 7:12 the plain implication is to a current belief that Jahweh, having subdued the monster of the deep, still "sittest watch over him"; so in Isaiah 57:20 and Jeremiah 5:22 the monster is represented as restlessly chafing against his bonds; so elsewhere the dragon is represented as still "in the sea",[2] as capable of being aroused by magicians,[3] and destined to be actually slain and annihilated in the last days of Jahweh's "sword".[4]

This characteristic of the Hebrew myth suggests to us one of the dominant concerns of Hebrew religion, namely the problem of evil. The Hebrews moved in an environment in which they were forced to wrestle with the hostile forces of famine, injustice, pain. They were living in an environment in which they consciously felt that forces were pitted against human life. The monster of evil was constantly breaking his bonds so that the future was uncertain and unpredictable.[4] It was therefore that the pious Hebrew turned to the magic of ritual, securing therefrom some assurance that in the ensuing year Jahweh, victorious in the past, would continue to subdue the rest-

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1. It is to be noted that "sea" and "Rahab" are identified in this passage as a matter of common knowledge.
2. Amos 9:3.
3. Is. 27:1.
4. Oesterley suggests that the clever sequent of the story of the Fall, the loosing of the "bolts" in the Flood story, and the many times Jahweh must still the "raging of the sea" are evidences of the continuing activity of evil to the Hebrew consciousness.

less, boisterous, raging waves of Tiamat, and that ultimately Jahweh would completely vanquish the hosts of evil. Thus each New Year Festival brought a veritable participation in the same creation process of the past, in which the community was promised a happy existence in the future.

For our purpose it will be unnecessary to trace the presence of the sacred marriage[1] and other features of the ritual festival. The climax of the whole liturgical drama was the procession in which the rejoicing multitude of worshippers, with instrument and song, ascended with Jahweh the hill of Zion, and, at the piercing blast of the shophar, the proclamation is made that Jahweh was once again seated upon his throne. It is altogether possible that in this triumphal procession Jahweh's presence was originally represented in some visible, definite way, just as the image of Marduk was carried in the procession. The fact that dominated this ritualistic climax was that Jahweh was with the people, that his favor was made manifest to them, and that with him in their midst the future was to be one of brightness and hope. No doubt some image of Jahweh assisted to make his presence a realistic thing. Later, of course, when Jahweh became more spiritualized in nature, his presence in the drama was thought of as being invisible. Nowhere is this triumphal procession described better than in Psalm 47:

> "O clap your hands, all ye peoples,
> Shout unto God with the voice of triumph;
> For Jahweh Most High, terrible is he,
> A King, great over all the earth.....
> God hath ascended with a shout,
> Jahweh, with the sound of the Shophar.
> Sing praises to God, sing praises,
> Sing praises to our King, sing praises,
> For King of all the earth is God,
> Sing praises,--a skilful song.
> God is King over the nations,
> He sitteth upon his holy throne....." [2]

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1. The idea of the sacred marriage was certainly familiar to the Hebrews as is evident from ritual prostitution in the temple (I Sam. 2:22; Amos 2:7; Hos. 4:14); from Is. 52:4 and Ez. 23:1ff; and from the fact that according to the Elephantine papyri, Jahweh had a spouse--Anath.
2. For other accession Psalms, see Ps. 29, 24, 118, 132.

T.H. Robinson sums up in a brief paragraph a possible reconstruction of this Hebrew liturgical drama:[1.]

> "It necessarily began with the removal of Jahweh and Anath from their home in the Temple, and with their occupation of a sacred hut in the neighborhood of the sanctuary, probably in a vineyard. Then began the story of Creation, opening with the great conquest of Jahweh against the powers of Chaos. This probably took different forms in different sanctuaries, but the issue was everywhere the victory of Jahweh. The divine marriage followed, consummated in the sacred hut, and this was succeeded by the death of Jahweh. After a period of lamentation He was restored to life, and, with His consort, was led to His home in the Temple, there to reign until the changes of the year brought back again the festal season."

From such a consideration as this, our conclusion is that in Israel there was a popular religion of essentially the same character as that of Babylonia, Egypt, and Canaan--that is, its dominant concern was with the determining of the future in the welfare of the community. That Jahweh was associated with agricultural needs, as was Marduk, Osiris, and Alein-Baal, seems evident, but, as we shall observe more fully later, the incipient eschatology of such nature religion had, by the time of Amos, become the thorough-going eschatology of a religion of history. This is not to seek in any way to deny the possibility that such a transition had been made earlier in Babylonia or Egypt, as many scholars are prone to believe. Nor is this an attempt to in any way deny the importance of Sellin's position that Israel, in having intercourse with other cultures, was merely stimulated to develop the seeds of eschatology which were native to her background and faith. Whether Israel borrowed her eschatology or whether she was merely stimulated to develop an incipient eschatology into a thorough-going eschatology which was her own, is not the important thing that needs to be said in our study. Whatever the origin of Israel's popular eschatology, by the time of

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1. Myth and Ritual, p. 188.

Amos there was a popular eschatology based upon the mentality of magic which characterized the religions of the entire Near East. Tehom (Tiamat) to Israel was the incarnation of evil, but Tehom was not only identified with the deity of darkness who menaced the regularity of the seasonal cycle, but also with the historical enemies who made the existence of the Hebrew state precarious. The same mentality that sought to control the seasonal cycle and thus assure an inevitably happy future was the same mentality that had been carried over into the field of history to assure an ultimate annihilation of all of the Tiamat-like political forces and the coming of a reign of prosperity, security, and peace.

Chapter V

THE POPULAR CONCEPTION OF THE DAY OF JAHWEH IN AMOS' TIME

Does not this approach from the standpoint of the popular mentality of the Near East provide us with a refreshing outlook upon the book of Amos? Earlier we noted the fact that the age of Jeroboam II was an age in which men, conscious of Jahweh's benevolent Kingship, reclined in opulence and prosperity. Yet it is to be seriously questioned if such ease which expressed itself in voluptuous abandon was not the symptom of a restlessness and anxiety which troubled men's lives beneath the superficial glamour and surface polish of their civilization. There seems to have been a fundamental strain of anxiety about the future running through the popular life of the eighth century. However prosperous were the times, there was yet the uncertainty of fertility, so that although men could lay on sumptuous feasts in their ivory houses, such a situation could easily be turned into misery and pain by the hostile elemental forces of their environment. Some scholars have recently averred that political anxiety played very little part in that day,[1] but certainly even the commonest peasant knew that the political equilibrium could not remain stable long in such a precarious international scene. There was only one way that the people could meet such uncertainty--that was to avail themselves of the safeties which religion could bring and thus, by means of magic, place a coercive control upon the future. Amos vividly pictures his countrymen thronging to the temple festivals and making lavish their sacrifices. Is not the mood which such a picture represents one of sublimated fear and anxiety--that is, a half-conscious fear that <u>unless</u> they attend their temple ceremonies and employ the controls of ritualistic magic they would be engulfed in national chaos and oblivion?

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1. See Welch, Adam, <u>The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom</u>, Amos, in loc.

A. The Secrets of Jahweh

The reason that the populace could "desire" the coming of the Day of Jahweh and accept its inevitability so nonchalantly was that through participation in the liturgical drama the future was revealed to them as it was almost predeterministically to take place. In Keet and Box's study of the Psalms this statement is made of Mowinckel's position in this regard:[1]

> "From the service itself, in fact, there arises a new life--the future; and when the past is represented in a dramatic manner as though it were still happening, an atmosphere for the future is created. We may form some idea of what is meant by the <u>secrets</u> of Jahweh. The worshippers can see what is going to happen; they may expect a glorious repetition of that which is represented in the drama of the service. . . Further, it may be noted that the myths concerning the dragon which were prevalent in those days, the myths also concerning the struggles between the nations, are to be counted the <u>secrets</u> to which the Psalmist alludes".

The worshipper knows Jahweh's "secrets" or "purposes" for the future since he has seen the future enacted in terms of the past with the potency of sympathetic magic, thus making its consummation practically inevitable.

These "secrets" involved the knowledge that not only did Jahweh's triumph over Tehom assure his favored subjects that he would likewise control the immediate future, but they also involved the anticipation of the inevitable coming of an eschatological future when Jahweh's "arm" would be "bared" and his "sword" lifted against all hostile nations. The cult myth which we discovered earlier to have possessed incipient eschatology has, by this time, come to have far-reaching eschatological implications. The magical control of the seasonal cycle has been carried into the field of history to mean the supernatural miracle of the Day of Jahweh. Just as in the realm of nature the Kingship of Jahweh means the vanquishing of the hosts of darkness and

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1. Keet and Box, <u>A Liturgical Study of the Psalter</u>, pp. 91f.

sterility and the reign of light and life, so in the realm of history his supremacy means that his "Day" would be one of light and not darkness, joy and not gloom. Until we sense this vivid contrast between light and darkness--personified in Babylonia by the conflict between Marduk and Tiamat, in Egypt by Horus and Sēth, in Canaan by Alein-Baal and Mot, in Israel by Jahweh and Tehom or Leviathan--we do not begin to understand Amos' allusion to the popular expectation that the Day of Jahweh was to be a burst of light with no shadow of darkness or evil in it. Indeed, this was the "secret" given by Jahweh through the medium of ritual and treasured by the pious worshipper: just as in the primeval abyss Jahweh triumphed over the powers of darkness and chaos, so in the future he would triumph over the power of darkness and evil--the mythological monster who was still brooding darkly in the background of even the prosperity of the eighth century--to assert his Kingship, to ascend his throne in victory, and to rule his favored people with the scepter of light and life.

B. Some Mythological Motifs in the Book of Amos

In the light of all that has been said concerning the liturgical drama and its implications for the future, it seems to me that there are several clues in the book of Amos itself which, when put together, provide adequate evidence that in the time of Amos there was being practiced in the temples of Bethel, Gilgal, and Beersheba the kind of popular religion of which we have been speaking. Not only do these clues when considered from this angle assume greater intelligibility, but, because they relate the book of Amos to the religious mentality of the Near East, they likewise cast illumination upon Amos' protest against the religion of his day.

1. The "Serpent" Passages

First, note the allusion to the mythological "serpent" in two striking passages, Amos 7:4 and 9:3b. We would expect Amos to allude to the "serpent" in just the opposite way in which the populace would, since, as we have noted, the whole tenor of Amos' message is one of fierce protest. Such is the case. In Amos 7:4, we find mention of the "T'hom Rabbah" (תְּהוֹם רַבָּה)[1]--the great watery abyss which is none other than Tiamat. T.H. Robinson suggests that here we have a variant account of the myth of creation in which Tiamat, rather than being slain by the use of the winds as chief weapons, is to be slain by the use of mythological fire. It seems that here Amos adopts the language of popular mythology to utter a profound prophetic truth, just as Hosea, in his day, adopted cultic language to speak the will of Jahweh. After we have given this passage the opposite turn from the thought which Amos intended, it seems justifiable to say that here we have a reference to a myth that was used in the temple ritual of his day, namely, the eschatological slaying of Tehom by the fire of Jahweh.

The second and more significant passage, Amos 9:3b, mentions "the serpent in the bottom of the sea". In Isaiah 27:1, Leviathan and the Serpent are made synonyms, and we have every reason to believe that all through the Old Testament the same watery chaos is referred to in varying forms--Tehom, Behemoth, Leviathan, Serpent, Dragon, Sea, Ocean, probably indicating various traditions about the same thing. The problem of the Serpent being in the sea, while elsewhere he seems to be identified with the sea, should give us no difficulty. In fact, variance in detail should be an additional argument for the mythological character of the whole thing, for mythology, as it comes down over a period of centuries, never adheres to laws of consistency. Once again, if we reverse the whole context in which we find this allusion, we undoubtedly arrive at an

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1. Cf. Is. 51:9; Gen. 7:11.

approximation of popular mythology, namely, that the primeval serpent--personification of all the forces of evil--still exists in the rising sea. But Jahweh has control over him. He has subdued him, he can command him. This fact, it is to be noted, is referred to as a matter of common knowledge, which provides a strong point in favor of the popular character of the myth.

Having noted the whole ritualistic pattern into which the serpent theme fitted in the Near East, is it not a fair conclusion to make that the "serpent" played a similar part in the liturgical drama of the temple of the eighth century B. C.?[1] By this time the popular mind had arrived at a thorough-going eschatology. To be sure, there was evil lurking in life, cleverly seeking to engulf the nation, for Tiamat was still chafing at his bonds. To be sure, there was uncertainty--agricultural and political--in the future. But this would not always be so. Jahweh's "secret" had been revealed for the ultimate future, so that the popular mind thought, no doubt, in terms of Isaiah 27: 1--

> "On that day will Jahweh punish
> With his 'sword' which is hard and great and strong,
> Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the coiled serpent;
> And he will slay the dragon that is in the sea".

2. An Allusion to the Ritualistic Festivals

The second clue which I find in Amos for such a liturgical drama in the eighth century is the passage Amos 5:21-27. Admittedly, it is one of the most uncertain passages in Amos textually, but considered in the spirit of its context in the light of the liturgical picture which we have been considering, it seems to make some sense. N. Schmidt, closely following Harper, translates this controverted passage as follows:[2]

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1. S. A. Cook suggests that the "Brazen Sea" which is mentioned in I Kings 7:23 as part of the temple furniture is a representation of this cosmic or primeval deep which was used in the ritual of the temple. Op. cit., p. 27f.
2. Cf. JBL XII, (1894), p. 11.

"I hate, I despise your feasts,
I cannot endure the smell of your feast-days.
For if ye bring me burnt-offerings and meal-offerings,
I care not for them;
And I will not look at the thank-offerings of your fat
bullocks.
Away from me with the noise of your songs !
I will not listen to the music of your cithers,
Let judgment pour forth like water,
Justice like a perennial stream !
Did ye bring me sacrifices and meal-offerings in the
wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel?
Did ye then carry about the tabernacle of your King,
the image of your god which ye have made for
yourselves?
Nay, I must send you in exile beyond Damascus,
Saith Jahweh, God of Hosts is his name".

Perhaps this is to let the imagination run rampant, but if our conclusions to this point are tenable, could this not be a prophetic protest against the kind of ritualistic festivals which we have been considering? The clear implication of this passage is that the populace thought themselves to be obtaining the favor of Jahweh through festal celebration, just as we have noted that the main motive in all liturgical festivity is the obtainment of the benign favor of the god for the future. In this passage the elaborate ritual is impugned which characterized such occasions--the thank-offerings for the fertility of the past, the singing and rejoicing which accompanied the festivals, and the triumphal procession in which the people carried with them a representation of Jahweh.

Verse 26, which has elicited numerous translations, might thus refer to the accession procession in which Jahweh's image was carried as a vivid manifestation of his ascension to the throne in royal state to distribute favors to his chosen people and to effect a new creation in which opposing powers should be conquered. To be sure, Amos was not acquainted with the cult detail as was Hosea, so that we most certainly would not expect this man from the country to recite fragments of the Bethel liturgy, but is it not logical

to suppose that Amos, who had so much to say against the cult, would single out for denunciation this most obvious and impressive climax to the whole cult drama? Certainly the element of unrestrained joy and confidence in future favor which obsessed every pious worshipper in such climactic moments would be just the attitude against which Amos would most boldly protest. The fact that Bethel was the "king's sanctuary" seems to yield an additional clue that at that sanctuary such royal processions were a dominant feature of the cult, and the denunciation of the king, Jeroboam, who, through such cultic ceremony, had been assured the power of Jahweh in the future over his enemies, would be just the thing against which Amaziah would react.

3. Deities Mentioned by Amos

Further evidence for the liturgical background of Amos' message may be found as we turn to a very crucial passage, Amos 8:14. This is a passage which in its present Massoretic reading makes little sense, so that most scholars have looked upon it with grave suspicion. So Wellhausen, insisting that nowhere else is Samaria used by Amos for Israel, believes that the text has been manipulated to read "the guilt of Samaria",[1] and that probably originally the god of Bethel stood in the text in series with the gods of the sanctuaries of Dan and Beersheba.[2] W. R. Smith sought to eliminate some of the difficulty by emending "guilt" (אשמת) to read "Asherah" (אשרת), an alteration which can be done by merely changing one consonant. This emendation has been accepted by Duhm and others. The discovery of the Elephantine papyri has brought a further suggested solution of the problem, for since it appears that some Jews in a colony in Egypt about the fifth century B. C. were not only worshipping Yahu

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1. Cf. Hos. 10:8 (חטאת ישראל).
2. Smith, W. R., Prophets of Israel, p. 140.

(Jahweh) but also Ashem-beth-el,[1] it is possible that 'Ashimah (אשמה) might have been the god connected with the sanctuary of Samaria, as it was connected with Hamath.[2] A likely suggestion, however, is that "guilt" has here been substituted for "Asherah", just as we have several instances of "Bosheth" being substituted for Ba'al.[3] If this is the case, we would expect Asherah to play a similar role in the cult-drama of Bethel, Samaria, and other sanctuaries as does the important Asherah of the Ras Shamra ritual in the Canaanitic cult.

The next reference in our text to "Thy God, O Dan" is vague. Since Amos was not as well acquainted with this far northern sanctuary as he was with more southerly shrines, he may possibly have intended the phrase to be indefinite as to his knowledge of the Danian cult detail, yet definite in the sense that he knew the same thing was going on up there as elsewhere, thus including the whole sweep of territory from Dan to Beersheba in one breath of denunciation. We do know that Jeroboam I set up the Golden Bull not only in Bethel, but in Dan also,[4] thus providing evidence that emphasis upon fertility and magical determination of the future was the religious atmosphere there also.

Textual confusion appears likewise in the latter part of this verse, where in parallel with the oath, "As thy God lives, O Dan" we would expect to find a similar formula repeated with reference to Beersheba. This, however, does not

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1. It is to be noted that the whole question of the triad mentioned in Elephantine records--Yahu, Anath-Bethel, and 'Ashima-Bethel--is an intensely debated question among scholars. Although the appearance of deities in triads is a common occurrence, yet the presence of 'Ashima-Bethel as a member of the triad cannot be determined upon such a priori grounds. (a) It has been proposed that rather than reading 'Ashima, this should be read Eshmun (מ ש ן with prefixed 'Aleph and movable nun) possibly thus being read "Name"--a divine title taking the place of the deity's name. (b) A second proposal is that here we have Ishum, a Babylonian fire-god; (c) while a third proposal is that '-s-m is Simē or Sima, the goddess at Hieropolis. At the best, the reading 'Ashimah is a mere conjecture. See Cook, op. cit., pp. 149f.
2. II Kings 17:30.
3. E.g., Mephibosheth for Meribaal (2 Sam. 4:4); Ishbosheth for Ishbaal (2 Sam. 2:8)
4. I Kings 12: 26-29.

occur, and rather we have the variant reading "way of Beersheba" which Harper suggests is an allusion to the many pilgrimages which were made to the shrine at Beersheba.[1] Other scholars, testifying to the difficulty of the text, have suggested such readings as "thy well", "thy lord", "thy god", "thy darling", "thy uncle", "thy technique" (or way of worship),[2] none of which seem to resolve the problem.

Since Hoffman, scholars have come increasingly to recognize that by a simple emmendation we can read instead of דַּרְכְּךָ or "way" the words דֹּדְךָ or "thy Dod". More and more evidence has been accumulated in recent years to lead to the conclusion that here we have not a common noun such as "darling"[3] but a proper name of a deity to be read, "As thy Dod lives, O Beersheba"--a parallel in style and thought to the preceding phrase. The sacred character of this name is born out by its being discovered in various name compounds of persons.[4] Also, it appears compounded with a city name such as Ash-Dod, and it was not an uncommon thing for a city to be named after a deity.[5] But the most convincing evidence that here we are dealing with the name of a deity is the fact that according to the Moabite stone, Israel worshipped a deity, "Dudah", in whose cult an altar-hearth was sacred.[6] Yet closer to our immediate concern we find in the Ras Shamra texts the name Dod appearing as a designation or appellative of Baal, the god whose dying and rising were part of the magical rites of Canaanitic religion.

Cripps, followed by Cook, has proposed the possibility that Amos is not only addressing his message of protest and denunciation against the altar of Bethel, but against a deity which carried the same name as the sanctuary and

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1. ICC, Amos and Hosea, p. 184
2. Cf. Judges 2:22; Jer. 10:2
3. As Leroy Watermann has conclusively demonstrated. AJSL XXXV, p. 101ff.
4. 'El-Dad, Num. 11:26; 'Eli-Dad, Num. 34:21; Me-Dad, Num. 11:26 (for 'Ammi-Dad); Dodo, Jud. 10:1; Doda-Jahu, 2 Chr. 20:37; Bildad (Ba'al-Dad), Job. 2:11; Hena-Dad, Ezra 3:9; David (דָּוִד), Amos 6:5
5. E.g., Jeru-shalem.
6. MI--line 12

whose priest was Amaziah.[1] In the Elephantine papyri we not only find the mention of Herem-Bethel, which could be translated "sanctuary of Bethel", but we also find mentioned the deity Ashem-Bethel together with the deity Anath-Bethel. This seems to indicate the possibility that even at such a late date there was a deity who carried the divine name of Bethel. This possibility is further supported by reference to Jer. 48:13, in which passage the prophet predicts that Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh even as the House of Israel shall be ashamed of Bethel, the deities Chemosh and Bethel being used in parallel. Cook further substantiates such a possibility by calling attention to the name Bethel-shar-eṣer[2] and by pointing out that it was not at all unusual in antiquity for the same word to represent the god of a place and at the same time to represent the place or sanctuary as an embodiment of the god.[3]

It has also been suggested[4] that the passage Amos 6:13--

> "You.....who say,
> 'Have we not by our own might taken <u>two horns</u>'"

is a reference to the popular cult language of the day and more specifically to a deity conceived as a bull.[5] Cook suggests that the horns of the altar of Bethel[6] were symbols of the strength and fertility power of that deity.[7] And an oft-made suggestion is that Ephraim is the dual of "bull" (עֵגֶל), thus possibly suggesting a male and female pair.[8]

The upshot of the above discussion is that in regard to the deities mentioned by Amos we have some scattered clues as to the nature of the popular religion of his time. From all that we are able to find out about them, these

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1. Amos 7:10
2. Zech. 7:2
3. Op. cit., p. 18
4. Cf. Graham and May, <u>Culture and Conscience</u>, p. 163
5. קַרְנַיִם is a dual and may be translated as above.
6. Amos 3:14
7. Op. cit., p. 27.
8. אֶפְרַיִם

deities took their place in a ritualistic pattern which was essentially magical in nature. Dod was a fertility-cult god,[1] Bethel might have been a bull-deity, and Asherah was a familiar deity of the Near East of a similar character. Amos has only a word of denunciation for them--not the denunciation of a theoretical monotheist, but the furious denunciation of one who cannot tolerate the attitude toward the future which they encouraged and the consequent immoral practices which were committed with their sanction. A time will come, warns Amos, when such deities will be utterly powerless, and those worshippers who depend upon them for resuscitation and protection will fall to the ground, never to rise again.[2]

4. Other Cultic Imagery

Yet another allusion to the mythology of the cult we find in Amos' reference to Sheol in a passage which, as we have noted is steeped deeply in mythology.[3] According to the Ras Shamra tablets, Sheol is the realm to which Moth drove Alein-Baal after he had overcome him. It is "the land of no return". Sheol here in Amos is the underworld as in Canaanitic mythology:

"Though they dig into Sheol. . .
Though they mount up to the heaven. . ."

In this realm of deep darkness men were supposed to be cut off not only from the land, but from Jahweh himself who could exert no power in that subterranean region, the realm of the god of darkness. Here again we find an excellent illustration of Amos protesting against current mythology and re-adapting it to the character of Jahweh. In the great and terrible day of destruction even Sheol would be useless as a hiding place, for Jahweh has control there just as he has control in the heavens, and his hand will bring doom upon all fugi-

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1. Isaiah 5:1-7 is the remnant of a fertility cult song which is addressed to "My Dod".
2. Amos 8:14.
3. Amos 9:2.

tives.

It is likewise possible that in Amos we have reference to the cult mourning[1] for the departed deity which Amos uses to describe the character of the Day of Jahweh.[2] It has been suggested[3] that "the mourning for an only son" is the weeping for the departed deity, that shaving the head and use of sackcloth were accompaniments[4] of such mourning, and that because such practices were affiliated with the Bethel cult herein we have the explanation of "the Weeping Oak of Bethel".[5] If this is true, here we have one more instance of Amos' using cult imagery to describe the woes of Jahweh's Day. Just as weeping was a prominent aspect of the cultus, so would there be weeping and wailing in every vineyard[6] when Jahweh's presence is made manifest to them. This, it is to be noted, is the reversal of the usual cult procedure, in which at the reappearance of the deity, mourning changed to joy and feasting. As one reads Amos, he cannot but be aware of the fact that Amos is dealing with literary materials which had found their place in popular tradition, and the mythological allusions which he makes are done without explanation, as if the whole matter were familiar to the most common resident of Ephraim.

Putting all of the foregoing together, it yields most astounding results in the study of Amos, for here we have fragmentary evidence recovered from a highly prejudiced text that rather than the common people of Amos' time remaining aloof from the culture of the day, they participated in the same liturgical emphasis which was the practice of the whole fertile crescent. Since Israel was saturated with this kind of magical religion--a fact which is amazingly evident from a study of Amos' virtual contemporary, Hosea--it

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1. Cf. Hos. 7:14f.
2. Amos 5:16, 17; 8:3; 8:10.
3. I am indebted to a classmate, C. Yonemura, for suggestions at this point.
4. Amos 8:10
5. Gen. 35:8
6. Amos 5:16f.

can be said with justification that Amos protested against that kind of popular mentality, proclaiming that upon the Day of Jahweh all who resort to the protections of their gods and the whole cult-drama will faint and fall. The fact that so much of Amos' prophecy is directed against specific sanctuaries[1] seems to be clear indication of the fact that he was protesting against the expression of popular religion as it took place there. Hosea, in reciting a fragment of ritual which was used in such temples, gives an insight into the popular mentality of that day:[2]

> "Come, let us return unto Jahweh,
> For he has torn, but he will heal us;
> He smote, but he will bind us up;
> He will revive us in two or three days;
> He will raise us up that we may live before him.
> .....
> He will come to us like the winter rain,
> Like the spring rain that waters the land."

Such facile nature religion had by the time of Amos crept unconsciously over into the Hebrew religion of history so that the future was faced with facile optimism and crass inevitability, and with all of the fervor and daring of the nomadic blood that yet coursed in his veins, Amos impugned such pseudo-religion. Although the "secrets" of Jahweh for the future which the people divine from their liturgical exercises are assurances of future security and well-being for the Israelitic community, Amos insists that Jahweh's real "secrets" are entrusted with his true servants, the prophets.[3] Amos' experience compells him to speak the "secrets" and "purposes" of Jahweh in history in the language of doom rather than optimism. Therefore, he is conscious of being a true servant of Jahweh as he hurled such oracular statements as these into the rejoicing multitudes which thronged to the liturgical festivals:[4]

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1. Amos 2:7bf; d:14; 4:4f; 5:4-7; 5:21-27; 7:12f; 8:13f; 9:1f.
2. Hosea 6:1f.
3. Amos 3:7
4. Amos 8:10

"And I will turn your festivals into mourning,
And all your songs into dirges;
And I will put sackcloth upon all loins,
And baldness on every head;
And I will make it like the mourning for an only son,
And the end of it like a bitter day."

Chapter VI

AMOS' DEVIATION FROM THE POPULAR DOCTRINE

All preceding chapters have prepared the way for what we shall now attempt to do, namely, to trace Amos' specific points of protest against the popular doctrine of the Day of Jahweh. We have felt in a general way the popular character of the "Day" and have seen the atmosphere of magic in which the concept was nourished. Now we turn to the clash of prophet with populace, seeking to observe the new insights of Amos which make him tower out above the populace as one of the great prophets of Israel. It is to be understood, however, that in the following pages we shall not attempt to describe Amos' total conception of the Day of Jahweh. Besides involving a lengthy consideration of such problems as the text itself, the relation of Judah to Amos' message, the question of monotheism, and many other relevant problems which would demand more space than can here be given, such would be alien to the central theme of this dissertation. Therefore, we shall consider only Amos' deviation from the current conception as a protesting prophet of Jahweh.

A. The Inevitability of the Day of Jahweh

One of the first points at which Amos violently disagreed with his contemporaries was as to the basis for the inevitability of the "Day". It was because he believed realistically in the future actuality of the Day of Jahweh, that Amos was able to adopt much of the popular vocabulary in describing its issue. Supernaturalistic, cataclysmic, sudden, inevitable, eschatological--all of those categories of thought were employed by the populace in painting with their imaginations the dawning of Jahweh's great and mighty day, and all of these categories of thought Amos likewise could employ. But whereas the inevitability of this future cataclysm was a thing which to the populace was assured because of their enthusiasm for religious observance and their employ-

ment of ritualistic magic, to Amos the inevitable arrival of the sudden and terrible Day of Jahweh was to be due to the disobedience of Jahweh's basic moral laws, the infraction of which brought sure and inevitable results.

Fundamentally, the clash between prophet and public lay in the difference in their conception of the relationship of Israel to Jahweh--for, whereas the people sought to obtain the favor of Jahweh's presence through religious ceremonies and to guarantee their future existence through the controls of magic, the prophet Amos insisted that the only means of imploring Jahweh's favor was through righteousness and justice and the only assurance for the continuity of national existence was the moral life. The crux of the conflict lay in the fact that to the populace the inevitable "Day of Jahweh" was to be the natural result of the ritualistic confirmation of Jahweh's favor to his chosen people, while to the prophet the Day of Jahweh was to be the inevitable result of "Jahweh's rejection of a people who had violated the moral character of the covenant.

The idea that a god could reject his people was not new in antiquity. The priesthood of Babylon ascribed the collapse of their capital and the rise of Cyrus to the anger of Marduk. The King of Moab who sacrificed his son upon the wall[1] believed evidently that his defeat at the hands of Israel was due to the temporary rejection of his people by their god, whose favor he sought to propitiate through such sacrifice. But among foreign nations, a god's rejection of his people was due to a capricious Will which the worshipper could not hope to fathom, or, more properly, as stated in the Cyrus cylinder, it was the outcome of certain sins against the cult itself. Yet in Amos what different thinking we have! Jahweh's anger with and rejection of his people in his great and terrible "Day" was not to be due to any capricious or inscrutable

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1. II Kings 3:27.

will such as characterized many of the gods of antiquity. Although the people had refused to listen to prophets and Nazirites, Jahweh had been revealing his moral will all down through Israel's history. Amos comes into public life with the testimony that he knows the nature of God and Jahweh's "purpose" for Israel's history, that Jahweh took him from following after the flocks to proclaim His righteous will to Israel, and that therefore he speaks the reason--the very word of God--for impending calamity.

Amos has been called "the prophet of causation" by Wellhausen, although this is certainly not to be taken in the sense in which we scientifically look at the cause-effect uniformity of nature and reason to a "First Cause" or an "Unmoved Mover", but in the sense that violations of moral law bring their inevitable effects. The most accepted translation of Amos 3:3-6 is that in that passage, in a succession of illustrations drawn from his own experience, Amos is putting forth his conviction that Israel lives in a moral realm in which the cause of national sin and apostasy brings its sure effect of punishment and doom. Just as a rendezvous between two men on a lonely desert depends upon a previous appointment, just as the sudden fall of a bird earthward has its sure cause, just as a trap that springs upward from the ground has its obvious cause, so in the moral realm the impending "Day of Jahweh" follows in sure sequence with the cause of sin and evil. Notice the many times in which Amos refers to this moral cause-effect law by the use of such words as "therefore", "thus", "so", "because". He never speaks of disaster without referring to its antecedent cause.[1.]

Amos asserts emphatically then that it is solely upon a moral basis that Jahweh will reject His chosen people. He chose them only to be the revelation of His will and character, but they had not been a revelation of a moral God in their corporate life. Calamities were sent by Jahweh to discipline them,

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1. Amos 1:3b; 1:4; 1:6b; 1:7; etc. 3:11; 4:12; 5:16 (follows verse 18); 5:25; 6:6b; 6:8c; etc.

but they did not learn from them.[1] Of all the families of the earth, Israel only had He known in any intimate sense, yet by immoral acts and evils done under the very sanction of religion, Israel had profaned that holy relationship.[2] As T. H. Robinson says in this regard:

> "The relationship of Jahweh to his own people meant not privilege to do wrong, but responsibility to do right. It was Israel that must adapt herself to this conception of a universal moral law, not Jahweh who must consider primarily the material advantage of Israel. If she failed here--and this is the real essence of the teaching of Amos--she lost her only raison d'etre, and, so far from protecting her, Jahweh would Himself ordain her ruin".

When Jahweh rejects his people in his "Day", even other nations can witness that He is doing such not out of caprice, but because of His very nature.[3] It is a necessity. Immoral society cannot long endure in Jahweh's moral domain. Too long has He borne the sins of society—the pride of Joseph, the gross immorality of those in positions of power and responsibility, the daring with which the fundamental sanctities of life were trampled upon. No longer will He turn "It" back--that vaguely terrifying result which follows inevitably in the wake of sin, and which found its specific expression in the Day of Jahweh.

Thus we see that as in the popular religion, so in Amos there is a certain immediacy and inevitability about the coming of the Day of Jahweh, but whereas among the people the "Day" was to be a day of favor, assured by the placation of Jahweh's favor through ritual, in Amos the "Day" was to be a day of rejection which followed as a consequence of violation of the clearly revealed moral character of Jahweh. Such a cataclysm follows as the night the day. It is just as inevitable as the most prosaic workings of the law of cause

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1. Amos 4:6-11.
2. Robinson, T. H., Prophecy and the Prophets, p. 69.
3. Amos 3:9.

and effect in desert life. Can horses run up steep cliffs, questions Amos? Or can one plow the sea with oxen?[1] Just as impossible is it for those who turn justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood and violate the laws of the moral order to continue living under the approval of Jahweh's favor. We live in a sternly moral world, is the message of Amos, where civilizations which are founded upon the sands of materialism and brute strength are swept away before Jahweh's mighty moral gales. Just as the stars in their courses fought against Sisera, so a moral God stands out sternly against evil and injustice. The dazzling brilliance of the prosperity of Jeroboam's II reign must inevitably be eclipsed by darkness.

B. The Nature of the Day of Jahweh

Although we have anticipated this factor of Amos' message, we must also observe that Amos violently disagreed with his contemporaries as to the character of the Day of Jahweh itself. While popular religion painted the future apocalypse in brilliant, imaginative colors of light and optimism, Amos, seeing the corruptness of moral and religious life which made Israel and Judah a veritable Sodom and Gomorrah, interrupted their pleasant fantasies about the futures with the contradicting words:[1]

"The Day of Jahweh is darkness and not light,
And blackness with no brightness in it!"

This mood of doom and gloom which made the prophet so unacceptable in his day, pervades the better part of his message--so much so that we may justifiably be suspicious of any passage which comes as a ray of light to relieve the unbearable darkness and doom of destruction.

1. The Restoration Passage--9:9-15

Our discussion becomes very important at this point when we recall from

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1. Amos 5:20

an earlier section that there are two opposing interpretations of eighth century prophecy: one, championed by Gressmann, which believes that in eighth century prophecy we find an "eschatological scheme" and it is therefore to be expected that the prophet Amos would alternate between darkness and light, destruction and restoration; while the other school, the most thorough-going representative of which, in America, is Fullerton, insists that in Amos, Micah, Hosea, and Isaiah of Jerusalem we have no strains of hope or restoration but only prophetic protest and doom. Thus, according to the former, Amos really did not protest against the theme of light and ultimate optimism in the popular religion, so that 5:18f. is only a partial statement of his message; according to the latter, Amos protested vehemently against the popular anticipation of light and restoration, so that 5:18f. represents the whole tenor of his message.

If we are to insist that the passage of restoration or appendix of the book of Amos is native to the message of the prophet,[1] not only are we to mitigate the force of Amos' protest against popular ideas about the Day of Jahweh, but we are to violate every principle of Biblical criticism which is known. It is an established fact that the whole Old Testament was subjected to a series of redactions lasting down to its very canonization. Many additions and changes were at a late time made in the interests of the usage of the Old Testament scriptures in the Temple, to which fact the "doxological interludes"--Amos 4:13; 5:8; and 9:5--will admirably testify. Does not the remarkable fact that the very Temple system which could not "bear" his words became the guardian of such prophetic literature down through the years, employing it in its services regularly, supply us *a priori* grounds with which to suspect the prophetic text as it has been given to us? Since, then, the genuineness of the motifs of light, optimism, and restoration de-

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1. Amos 9:8c-15

termines to a great degree the measure of Amos' deviation from popular religion, it is to a textual consideration of the appendix that we shall now turn.

The very abruptness of the transition from doom to promise in chapter nine is, at first glance, a strong reason for suspecting the hand of a later editor, but upon deeper consideration of the matter it is necessary to yield to the arguments of those who defend the authenticity of this passage, seeing in it a very minor point of suspicion if indeed we can rely upon it at all. So Gressmann insists that the literary units in the prophets are very small "fragments" which represent a short ecstatic utterance, and that the arrangement of them in their present form with abrupt transitions is purely arbitrary. Likewise, Meyer believes that we have no right to impose our rigid occidental rules of logic upon this oriental literature, for contradiction in idea and style is a characteristic of such prophecy. Sellin also defends this passage, declaring that it is out of place in its present context and that if the prophecy were rearranged slightly all abruptness would be relieved.[1] At least we may agree with such scholars as these this far, concluding that the argument from abruptness is no argument <u>per se</u>.

However, there are other cogent reasons for excluding this passage from the genuine prophecies of Amos, which will be listed below:

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1. Ernst Sellin in 1912 (<u>Der Alttestamentliche Prophetismus</u>) argued that Amos did not utter the closing passage in Bethel or even the Northern Kingdom. He announced utter destruction for the Northern Kingdom, but his closing meditation was added by him when, on his way home, he stopped at Jerusalem and put his work together, conscious of the fact that the downfall of the Northern Kingdom could not be the end of God's ways. This suggestion, besides being rather imaginative, presupposes that Judah was more under the favor of Jahweh because of a better moral life than was Ephraim, which is certainly not the picture of Judah given by Isaiah a few years later. It also presupposes a belief that the perpetuation of a certain nation is necessary to the activity of God which is definitely a non-prophetic attitude. Sellin, sensing the difficulties involved in this suggestion, in 1920 (<u>Introduction to the Old Testament</u>, 3rd edition) places this passage after Amos 7:16-17, seeing in it a continuation of doom announced to Amaziah for whom the brilliant future of Judah signified humiliation for Ephraim.

a) Amos 9:18c is distinctly the addition of a later Jew, who, having noted that the total destruction predicted by Amos had not been fulfilled, added the clause: "Save that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob". Harper points out that strophically this clause is superflous, and it is also obvious that it involves a contradiction of meaning for the Jacob that is here to be saved is the same Ephraim which elsewhere Amos consigns to destruction. 1.

b) This passage also involves a modification of destructive doom to disciplinary doom which is no doubt the interpretation of a later writer--certainly not the thinking of Amos, in whose message nowhere else does such a thought appear. 2.

c) Some of the allusions in this passage betray it as the product of a later time. So the allusion to Israel being "sifted" among the nations refers obviously to the exile. The general impression is given that the writer of this passage is looking back upon a ruined nation, rather than Ephraim and Judah being in the zenith of their glory as was true in Amos' time. See verses 11, 14, and 15.

d) The favorable attitude toward Judah which we find in this passage seems, notwithstanding Sellin, alien to Amos who elsewhere seems to speak of the destruction of Judah and Israel in the same breath. 3.

e) Furthermore, the emphasis upon materialistic blessings and fertility--the mountains "dripping new wine", the hills "melting" with produce--to the exclusion of the moral accent, is certainly the spirit of later apocalyptic, not the spirit of Amos who injected a moral spirit into everything of which he spoke.

f) Again, the emphasis upon the fact that only the sinners of the nation shall die while the righteous are spared is the product of later individualism, certainly not the message of Amos who saw doom falling upon the just and the unjust alike.

g) The bitterness which is implied in the fact that of all nations Edom is mentioned as being subdued by Judah fits more accurately into a later time, when, after the fall of Jerusalem, the Edomites sought revenge for the fact that Judah had for so long dominated her. This would account for the bitter feeling of the Judahites for the Edomites which we cannot safely attribute to Amos' time. 4.

h) Finally, we should note that the language and style of this passage betray a later time. Similarities in language can be traced with later writings. For instance, close affinities appear between verse 11 and Is. 11:1; verse 13a and Lev. 26:5; verse 13b and Joel 4:18; verse 14 and II Kings 19:29, Jer. 14:9, Is. 54:3, Dt. 28:39f., Zeph. 1:13. The phrase "thy God" is one which Amos seems consciously to avoid using in his genuine prophesy.

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1. Amos 5:1, 4, 6; 6:8, 14; 7:2, 5, 10, 16; 8:7.
2. Cf. Amos 5:1f; 9:1f.
3. Amos 6:1; 6:11b.
4. Ez. 25:12; 25:5; Is. 34; Obad. 10-14; Ps. 137:7; Joes 3:19.

Speaking of the unharmonious relation that exists between the rest of Amos' prophecy and this passage in question, Adolphe Lods says:[1]

> "These assertions which opened up vistas of thought so new, but so disturbing to the minds of antiquity, are immediately followed, in the book as it now stands, by an appendix so full of consolation, that if it were authentic, it would reduce the daring denunciations of Amos to the proportions of a village squabble."

The upshot of the above textual discussion is that we cannot attribute such a hope passage to Amos, finding it to be a liturgical appendix which was added at a late date to his message of doom in order to make it more usable in popular religion. It was the very mentality which demanded the addition of this passage of light and hope--the mentality which with apocalyptic imagination desired the coming of Jahweh's "Day" of abundant fertility and political supremacy--against which Amos protested. Rather than mildly moralizing an eschatological scheme of doom-hope, Unheil-Heil, or darkness-light such as dominated the popular religion, Amos protested against such an outline of faith, insisting that the word of Jahweh for the eighth century B.C. was one of darkness with no light whatsoever and doom with no comforting hope.

2. The Remnant

This brings to our consideration a belief which was closely allied with the conception of the Day of Jahweh, namely, the belief that there was to be a favored Remnant--Israel--for whom the Day of Jahweh would not mean judgment, but the contented knowledge that their God, Jahweh, reigned upon his throne to distribute royal favors and blessings to his favored nation.

That there was a doctrine of the Remnant before Amos seems apparent not only from such a passage as 5:15, but from the general character of popular eschatology itself. In the popular mind, this remnant was not considered to be a remnant of the faithful, as it later came to mean, but as a remnant

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1. Lods, Adolphe, Prophets and the Rise of Judaism, p. 85

which was synonomous with the nation Israel itself--a nation which, when other nations were swept away in Jahweh's terrible avalanche of doom, would remain secure and untouched. Thus Amos' audience could listen eagerly, no doubt, as he scanned the international horizon and saw the supernatural fire of Jahweh about to descend upon neighboring nations, since they knew confidently that, because of Israel's favored relation to Jahweh, He would be gracious unto "the Remnant of Joseph".[1.]

Amos vigorously assails such a belief. Overturning their conviction that Israel was to be a favored remnant because of her intimate relation with Jahweh,[2.] Amos assures the confident populace that in Jahweh's "Day" there would be a remnant, but it would be the pitiful remnant of a few scattered people who escape merely because they are negligible. Rather than being a spared nation, the remnant will be--as T.H. Robinson suggests--but the mutilated remains of a once thriving nation, just as the mutilated remains which the shepherd rescues from the mouth of a lion--two bones and the lobe of an ear--to give as evidence of total destruction.[3.] Or, changing the figure, Amos warns the people that days are coming when they will be dragged away with hooks, and the small remnant with tiny fish hooks.[4.]

Such language is the language of furious protest, and, no doubt, is somewhat hyperbolic in nature. It seems unwise to go with Amend to the extreme and assert that Amos' message was one of such unmitigated doom that the call to repentance was not seriously meant and there was no room whatsoever for a remnant in his thinking.[5.] Deep religious experience always leaves room for the Divine Perhaps, as did Amos when he said:[6.]

> "Hate evil, and love good
> And establish justice at the gate;
> Perhaps Jahweh, the God of hosts
> Will be gracious to a remnant of Joseph."

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1. Amos 5:15
2. Amos 3:2
3. Amos 3:12
4. Amos 4:2,3
5. Amos 5:6; 5:14,5; cf. 5:24
6. Amos 5:15

However, along with his deep piety there was also a moral realism in his nature which prompted him to see what men in their prosperity and festivities had been blind to, namely, the essentially immoral character of Israel's social life and the coming Assize-Day of Jahweh. To be sure, there would be a remnant in Jahweh's "Day", but it would be pitifully insignificant and from the standpoint of a once glorious Israel would be merely a testimony of national doom and destruction.

3. The Political Factor vs. the Eschatological Factor in Amos' Message

However, at this point a further question arises. Having admitted that the prevailing tone of Amos' prophecy is doom in contrast to the popular hopes of favor and abundance, scholars are in much disagreement as to whether or not Amos broke so completely with popular religion that he also rejected its eschatological or supernatural doom. Sellin insists that Amos' predictions of doom have no essential connection with his political insight;[1] and so independent a scholar as Welch is convinced that in Amos the political factor was negligible when compared with his eschatological concern.[2] On the other hand Smend says that throughout all the visions of chapter seven, psychologically interesting as is their imagery, Amos has in the back of his mind Assyria;[3] Cripps, Edgehill, and Micklem seem to think that Amos predicted an Assyrian captivity, although in "cryptic terms"; while Winckler goes so far as to suggest that Amos is a politician from Judah who came to the north to spread about some forceful propaganda in favor of union with Judah.[4]

The case for the dominance of the Assyrian menace in Amos' mind is weakened by the fact that nowhere in Amos is Assyria definitely mentioned as the

1. Cf. Micklem, op. cit., p. 115 for this reference.
2. See page 90.
3. Cf. Micklem, ibid, p. 113.
4. Winckler believes that all the prophets were primarily politicians--as in I Kings 22:6f. According to Winckler, Amos is supposed to go to Ephraim as an agent of Ahaz with the chief purpose of stirring up the people of the northern kingdom against Pekah. Since it suits his rather imaginative theory better, Winckler redates Amos' ministry to the time when Pekah, not Jeroboam was on the throne. Winckler, Geschichte Israels I, pp. 78-113.

instrument of Jahweh's punishment.[1] Such vagueness would hardly characterize a political prophet if his message were the fact that Israel was soon to be engulfed in an international vortex of doom. Adam Welch calls attention to the fact that such vagueness about "the nation" is readily explainable when we realize that at this time there was a lull in international aggression and warfare.[2]

Micklem, who seeks to strip prophecy of all eschatology, asserts frankly that the whole case for the Assyrian menace rests upon the passage Amos 5:27 in which occur the words "beyond Damascus", for if this rather vague reference, he argues, means transportation into Assyrian territory beyond Damascus, then surely it may be said that the captivity referred to in 6:7 and 9:4 and "the nation" and "the foe" refer also to Assyria. If this is the strategical passage for the solution of the Assyrian problem, it might be said to be open to two attacks.

In the first place, it must be noted that this particular verse is in a rather precarious position textually, for certainly the last phrase of verse 27, "whose name is the God of hosts", is a later interpolation, and since verse 27a does not go well with the preceeding verse, it is argued by some scholars that all of verse 27 is a gloss. Another argument launched against the Assyrian implication of the phrase "beyond Damascus" is that it is merely a poetic allusion. Just as Edgehill feels that the deportation to Kir of Amos 1:5 is

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1. In Amos 3:9, Ashdod is sometimes translated "Assyria" after the LXX, although it is equally as possible to emend the text of "Egypt" to some other Philistian city to be used in parallel with Ashdod. Even though "Assyria" is correct in this passage, the parallel reference to Egypt indicated the vagueness and uncertainty of the whole Assyrian problem.
2. Assyria was not at this time a definite menace, only in so far as she was the military superior of insignificant Israel. Jeroboam's II great grandfather, Jehu, had paid humiliating tribute to the Assyrian king, Shalmanesar II, but by this time such was but a memory.

not a geographical detail, but a poetic allusion,[1] so Welch insist, with equal right, that "beyond Damascus" is not a geographical detail, but a poetic allusion to the vast mystery land beyond the borders of Damascus to which Israel would be carried in the Day of Jahweh. Whether or not these arguments are cogent, at least it may be said with certainty that the vagueness of Amos about Assyria seems to indicate that he was more than a politician and that he sought categories of description other than captivity and wasting war to speak of the coming of the cataclysmic Day of Jahweh.

Another factor which weakens the case for the dominance of the political factor in Amos' thinking is Amos' continual use of other imagery than military terms to describe the cataclysmic coming of Jahweh's "Day". Smend's suggestion that even when Amos employed earthquake or pestilence imagery he had his eye all the time upon Assyria seems to be utterly unconvincing, while Micklem, having observed the "cryptic" language of Amos and discarded it as unimportant, has missed much of the character of Amos' prophecy. The fact that the categories of war and captivity do not plumb the depths of Amos' thinking is readily apparent when we realize that Amos' final vision, in which he sees a supernatural hand smiting the capitals of the temple and causing the very thresholds to tremble and crumble as if by earthquake, could hardly be a reference to the onslaught of the Assyrian army. Such a military invasion would hardly be directed against the altars of the temple.

Probably the most important and suggestive imagery in the book of Amos is that of fire. Again and again he refers to Jahweh's fire,[2] seeming in doing so to draw upon language that was familiar to Hebrew tradition.[3] As many scholars have pointed out, this fire might well be interpreted as the fire of military conquest or perhaps the fire of Jahweh's wrath. Such a hypothesis is

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1. Because of the difficulty of transporting the Syrians back to their original home.
2. Amos 1:4,7,14; 2:2; 4:11; 5:6; 7:4.
3. Cf. Hos. 8:14; 9:3; Is. 25:11; 30:27; Jer 27:27; 21:14; Dt. 32:22; Ps. 28:8.

plausible until we come to Amos' vision in which he sees Jahweh's supernatural fire devouring the T'hom Rabbah or the "great deep" upon which the earth was supposed to rest. Certainly Amos is speaking of no fire of military conquest in this passage. Amos here is resorting to the language of mythology to express an act of Jahweh which was so supernatural that practical and prosaic categories such as war and captivity were empty symbols. It seems very plausible, with Gressmann and others, to see in this imagery the divine fire of the world-catastrophe, and that possibly all through Amos the use of the imagery of "devouring fire" has this same connotation. Amos had once interceded to avert the coming of this supernatural fire and Israel had herself been as a brand snatched from the burning.[1] But no longer can this supernatural fire be averted. Divine patience had been exhausted with immoral society. So Amos pictures this divine fire of Jahweh rushing upon the tottering structures of foreign nations, and although the profundity of Amos' religion prompts him to say: "Seek Jahweh that ye might live", the character of his prophecy would indicate that such would never occur and that Jahweh would inevitably "set the house of Joseph on fire".[2]

We have previously noted Amos' reference to the primeval Serpent of the abyss as indicative of his employment of mythology. In the same context we should notice the several references to "the Sword". As Gressmann has suggested this might well be the Sword of Jahweh which He used to triumph over the primeval monster of chaos. The probability of this suggestion is enhanced when we recognize that it occurs in a passage steeped deeply in mythology. In this passage Amos is speaking of the supernatural intervention of Jahweh as being a day in which the categories of escape or captivity will be inadequate to describe the dread terror of Jahweh's presence;[3]

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1. Amos 4:11.
2. Amos 5:6.
3. Amos 9:3b, 4.

"Though they hide themselves from my eyes on the floor
of the sea,
There will I command my Serpent that it bite them;
Though they go into captivity before their foes,
There will I command the Sword that it slay them."

This is no ordinary Sword--it is a mythological sword such as we find at Jahweh's command in Ex. 14:17--"Sword go through the land". It is the mythological Sword "which is hard and great and strong" with which in the last days Jahweh is going to slay that very serpent that is in the sea.[1] It is the same whirling devouring Sword of Jahweh to which Hosea alludes:[2][3]

"The Sword shall whirl upon his cities,
And make an end of his fields, and shall devour his
pastures.

The use of such natural imagery in Amos , such as earthquake, pestilence, fire, or tempest, calls our attention to an important fact to note about the character of Jahweh. We have previously observed the intimate connections of Jahwism with warfare, in which Jahweh Himself was a "man of war". This is eminently true, but it is only a partial statement. In the beginning, Jahweh seems to have been a god of nature, engaging in warfare to be sure, but using as His weapons the terrible elemental forces of nature. So tradition speaks of Jahweh's Sinai theophany as that of a storm god or volcanic deity--the master of fire and earthquake.[4] Likewise, in the song of Deborah, the triumphant march of Jahweh was accompanied by terrible natural convulsions. Must we not, then, say with Gressmann that although Jahweh is a war-god, he "fought for Israel with storm, hail, thunderstorm, earthquake, fire, and pestilence, or, in other words, Jahweh is a war god only in so far as he is a nature god"?[5] We would not expect Amos, then, to use merely categories of political warfare,

1. Is. 27:1. Cf. Jer. 47:6; Ez. 21:3; 32:10; Is. 34:5f.
2. Gen. 3:24.
3. Hos. 11:6.
4. Jud. 5:4f.
5. Gressmann, Op. cit. p. 76.

for since these nature passages which refer to Jahweh as a god of nature are manifestly earlier, it is apparent that Amos is dipping deeply into popular vocabulary that conceived the manifestation of Jahweh's supernatural presence in his "Day" as accompanied by general convulsions of nature.[1]

Earthquake, pestilence, tempest, draught, fire, flood, tornado--a whole array of mythological allusions referred to with such little elaboration that they were evidently popular possessions--these Amos marshals at the command of his genius to speak about a thing which to him transcended language--the supernatural cataclysm known popularly as "The Day of Jahweh". To see Amos as merely a political forecaster, who, while his contemporaries ate, drank, and made merry in the full flush of their prosperity, felt himself commissioned to preach merely the imminence of Assyria is to have only a partial and one-sided view of this great prophet of Israel. It is a consciousness of the profundity of Amos' message, in which every form of imagery is exhausted to speak of the moral majesty and supernatural power of Jahweh which had become the realities of the prophet's experience, which prompts Welch to say:[2]

> "Jahweh is about to intervene in order to make His purpose manifest and His end valid. The prophet is not thinking of this intervention as about to be carried out by Assyria or any other instrument. In truth he is beyond the thought of any instrument: his thought runs out on a plane where such ideas are insignificant and out of place. What he insists upon is that this is about to come from Jahweh, because to him it is the emergence in the world of God's spiritual purpose for His world. The thought is along the line of what we are in the habit of calling apocalyptic."

Yet with all of this evidence arrayed against the question of the Assyrian background of Amos' prophecy, it is to go to an equally unwise extreme to say that politics, and possibly Assyria, played absolutely no part in Amos' mes-

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1. Cf. Amos 1:4; 2:14; Mic. 1:3f; Is. 28:17ff; 29:6; 30:27, 30, 33; Jer. 4:13; 23:19; Zeph. 1:2; Is. 13:9ff.
2. Welch, Adam, The Prophets and the World-Order, p. 34.

sage. Military imagery is used, be it observed, but it is merely one of the various thought-categories which he uses, and when he employs it he always invests it with an eschatological content. Therefore, Jahweh's overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, a military accomplishment, is spoken of in the same breath with supernatural draught, and pestilence--thus lifting it to the plane of the eschatological.[1] It is altogether possible that even in the age of Jeroboam II when there was a temporary relaxation of the international tension Amos was aware of the rising power of Tiglath-Pileser and the comparative weakness of Ephraim and Judah. But to reduce Amos' message to merely the political is to violate it. Amos' message was an eschatological message. Jahweh, to him, was about to intervene and assert the moral basis upon which everything permanent must be built. To describe that intervention--so supernatural in character and so devastating in result--Amos employs every form of imagery at his control: wasting war, captivity, earthquake, fire, plague--all of these Jahweh has at his command and none of them alone could adequately describe the character of the divine cataclysm. The following passage should make apparent the medley of images which Amos uses:[2]

> "So I will kindle a <u>fire</u> upon the wall of Rabbah,
> And it shall devour her palaces,
> With shouting on the day of <u>battle</u>,
> With a storm on the day of <u>tempest</u>."

In conclusion, it may be said that Amos agreed with the popular conception of the times at at least one point: the Day of Jahweh was to be eschatological. But Amos radically breaks with popular religion at the point of the meaning of the Day of Jahweh for Israel's future. Rather than being an apocalypse of light, it would be an apocalypse of darkness. To be sure the Day of Jahweh would be sudden in its coming, but it would be a day of sudden horror, as if a

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1. Amos 4:6-11
2. Amos 1:14

man were running from a lion, and, thinking himself out of danger, a bear should suddenly confront him; or as if a man should enter his house and carelessly rest his hand on the wall, only to be bitten by a serpent and paralyzed with fear.[1] Rather than being a day of exultation in military strength, it would be a day when the swiftest, strongest, and bravest should flee away naked before the terrible manifestations of Jahweh's presence.[2] Rather than being a day of festal celebration, it would be a day when all of the strongholds of religion would be destroyed and weeping and wailing should be heard instead of ritualistic rejoicing.[3]

Most significant is the fact that in speaking of the Day of Jahweh Amos adopts popular religious mythology, but inverts its meaning. So he can accept the Serpent myth as a demonstration of Jahweh's power over primeval chaos, symbolic also of Jahweh's power in subduing Egypt and destroying the giant-like Amorites, and symbolic further of Jahweh's similar triumph in the future. But, contrary to the popular notion, the future manifestation of Jahweh's supernatural power would be to command the "serpent" to devour the refugees of Israel, and Jahweh's triumph in the eschatological future would be to destroy the personification of evil and injustice which, rather than being Tehom, was Israel herself ! The supernatural fire which, according to popular mythology, was to be a weapon of Jahweh in destroying Tehom, had already threatened to consume the land and in the future Israel, together with other foreign nations, will be destroyed in a conflagration of fire. The mythological Sword which, according to the popular notion, was at the command of the will of Jahweh for the slaying of all opposing enemies, will be the very weapon which will be used to destroy Israel, who, because of corruptness and violation of Jahweh's moral character before the nations, is the veritable enemy of Jahweh ! Contrary to the mood of popular religion, Jahweh's accession

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1. Amos 5:19f.
2. Amos 2:13f.
3. Amos 5:17; 8:10-9:1

to His throne in the future, rather than meaning abundance and welfare, would mean judgment and doom.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

This study was encouraged by the stimulating work of Gressmann in the field of eschatology, who, because of his emphasis upon pre-prophetic eschatology, has placed the eighth century canonical prophets in an entirely different light. From a study of Gressmann's position, my impression was that although he had provided invaluable knowledge in the field of popular eschatology, he threatened the originality of the prophets by seeking to force their message into the popular outlines of thought.[1] The several attempts which have recently been made to defend the restoration passage or appendix as an authentic statement of Amos' Heils- und Unheilseschatologie are examples of the dangerousness of a good theory when everything is made to conform to it.

Since the publication of Gressmann's important work, many archaeological materials have been discovered which make possible a study of the popular background of the Old Testament literature. Such an approach has been used in this study with the purpose of making Amos stand out in clear relief against the culture of his day. Although favored with more materials in the making of such a study than was Gressmann, the conclusion of this investigation in regard to popular religion is essentially the same as his: namely, that the incipient eschatology of antiquity which was nourished in an atmosphere of magic and cultic ceremony had, by the time of Amos, become a thorough-going popular eschatology. There was a popular eschatological myth which anticipated the eschatological annihilation of the monster of darkness who menaced agricultural fertility and political security and the accession to his throne of Jahweh, the God of Light and Life, who would distribute abundance and assure

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1. This was my impression before reading Fullerton's article in which the same position is assumed: "Viewpoints in the Discussion of Isaiah's Hopes for the Future". JBL 40 (1922), pp. 1-101.

protection to His favored people.

However, in seeking to relate Amos to that popular eschatology we did not seek to reduce his message to the scheme of the popular doctrine of the future with a few original moral trimmings, but we saw him protesting against the outlines of popular eschatology. The pivotal passage was Amos 5:18f. If, in the spirit of Gressmann, we demand that the message of Amos includes the theme of light, optimism, and eschatological hope, then 5:18f. is reduced to a mere contradiction. If, on the other hand, we acknowledge Amos' message to be a message of judgment and eschatological doom, 5:18f. carries the force of protest and harmonizes with the whole tenor of his prophecy.

It has been to the purpose of seeing Amos standing out in protest against the popular religion of his day with its political nationalism and superficial optimism that the preceding chapters have been devoted. The sequence of our consideration was as follows:

1. Our investigation began with an observation of the spirit of protest which characterized Amos' message, that protest reaching the climax of vehemence as it was directed against the popular doctrine of the future. At every point at which Amos touched popular religion there was some word of protest or denunciation laid against the sanctuaries and officials of popular religion as being the source of men's spiritual poverty and moral recklessness. The nebi'im had been cultivating eschatology but with a popular and nationalistic flavor, and Amos broke with such a degenerate order. The priests likewise were the incarnation of the mood of popular religion and, since they encouraged a false attitude toward the future, Amos clashed with that profession. Amos marks the turning point in the history of prophecy, for, whereas up unto his time prophecy was a stimulant of nationalism, in Amos prophecy stood apart from Israel's national life to protest.

2. In order to determine whether or not this popular doctrine against which Amos so vigorously protested was political or eschatological in character--an issue keenly debated by scholars--some of the factors which would make such an eschatology possible were observed. Israel's covenant relationship and her precarious geographical situation on the "fertile crescent" were two of the things which were most favorable to the development of eschatology.

3. Conscious of the fact that the Near East was a cultural integrity, we then surveyed the mythology of Babylonia, Egypt, and Canaan if perchance their popular religions possessed an eschatology. In each case there was the same desperate concern about the future and an effort to control that future through ritualistic magic. A widely current myth was the "Serpent Myth", and invariably that myth, although referring to the primordial, held important implications for the future. The most important element of these popular religions was the economic motif which was dramatically represented by the seasonal death and resurrection of the god--a cycle whose recurrence was guaranteed by sympathetic magic. Rather than enter into the more debatable question as to whether such popular religion involved a thorough-going eschatology, it was the conclusion that in the popular religions of the Near East there was at least an <u>incipient</u> eschatology based upon a mentality of magic.

4. Turning to Israel's popular religion, it was discovered, in the wake of Mowinckel, that there is much evidence that the same type of religion was practiced in Israel's temples as pervaded the whole Near East. There seems to have been celebrated at a very early time in Israel's history a New Year Festival based upon sympathetic magic and dominated by an anxious concern about the future. A distinct element of the ritual was the Serpent myth, which, by the time of Amos at the very latest, had implications of a thorough-going eschatology. The climax of the New Year Festival was the accession of Jahweh

to His throne. Although this at first held illustrious for only the immediate future, it soon came to concern the ultimate future, so that the pious worshipper of Amos' time could anticipate a "Day" of Jahweh's final triumph over all adversaries--economic and political, and the eschatological annihilation of the primeval monster of darkness, Tehom.

5. To validate the suggestion that such was the character of Israel's popular religion, evidence was adduced from the book of Amos itself. Two striking references to the Serpent myth are made in their context as if the allusion was common knowledge, and provide justification that such a myth was an element of popular religion. Other mythological motifs were traced in the book of Amos to support the conclusion that Amos was dealing with a mentality of magic, in which the general belief was that through the sympathetic magic of myth and ritual the future was predetermined to be one of abundance and prosperity. Such was the basis of the optimism of popular eschatology.

6. This knowledge of the popular mentality and the popular eschatology provided a background against which the protest of Amos could be viewed more clearly. At whatever other points Amos may have agreed with his contemporaries, he violently disagreed with popular religion at two points: first, the Day of Jahweh was to come inevitably not because of the coercion of ritualistic magic, but because of disobedience of moral laws; second, the Day of Jahweh was to be an apocalypse of doom rather than an apocalypse of light. Reversing the meaning of much popular mythology, these were the two main deviations he made from popular religion.

When seen in the light of the popular background of his day, Amos would well deserve, in our own estimation, to be classified as one of the major prophets of Israel. Although the conclusions of this investigation forbid that Amos' message be forced into the outlines of popular eschatology, we have at least been provided with the norms of his own culture by which we can es-

timate his originality and genius. Having seen the nationalism of a favored nation as it expressed itself in eschatology, we see Amos protesting against such, asserting the fact of his prophetic experience that the only real bond which can unite a nation to Jahweh is the moral life. Having seen the emphasis upon magic which pervaded popular eschatology, we listen to Amos protesting that the most terrific powers are moral forces--forces which can either tear down or build up. Having seen the character of the deities of the Near East and the role which they play in the cult drama, we find Amos protesting against any view which reduced the God of Israel to the same character as other deities and asserting the moral majesty of Jahweh. Having seen the outlines of popular eschatology which were based upon fantasy and desire, we find Amos protesting against such a false doctrine of the future, and basing his thorough-going eschatology upon experience and realism.

Such a study has, perhaps, provided such a cultural and popular background to Amos' ministry which can act as a gauge of his forcefulness and originality. Amos becomes for us more than a rustic peasant coming up from the country-lands of Tekoa to accept the alternating spirit of doom and hope which characterized popular religion. In isolated grandeur he stands out against the popular background of his century as a true, protesting nabi'.

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